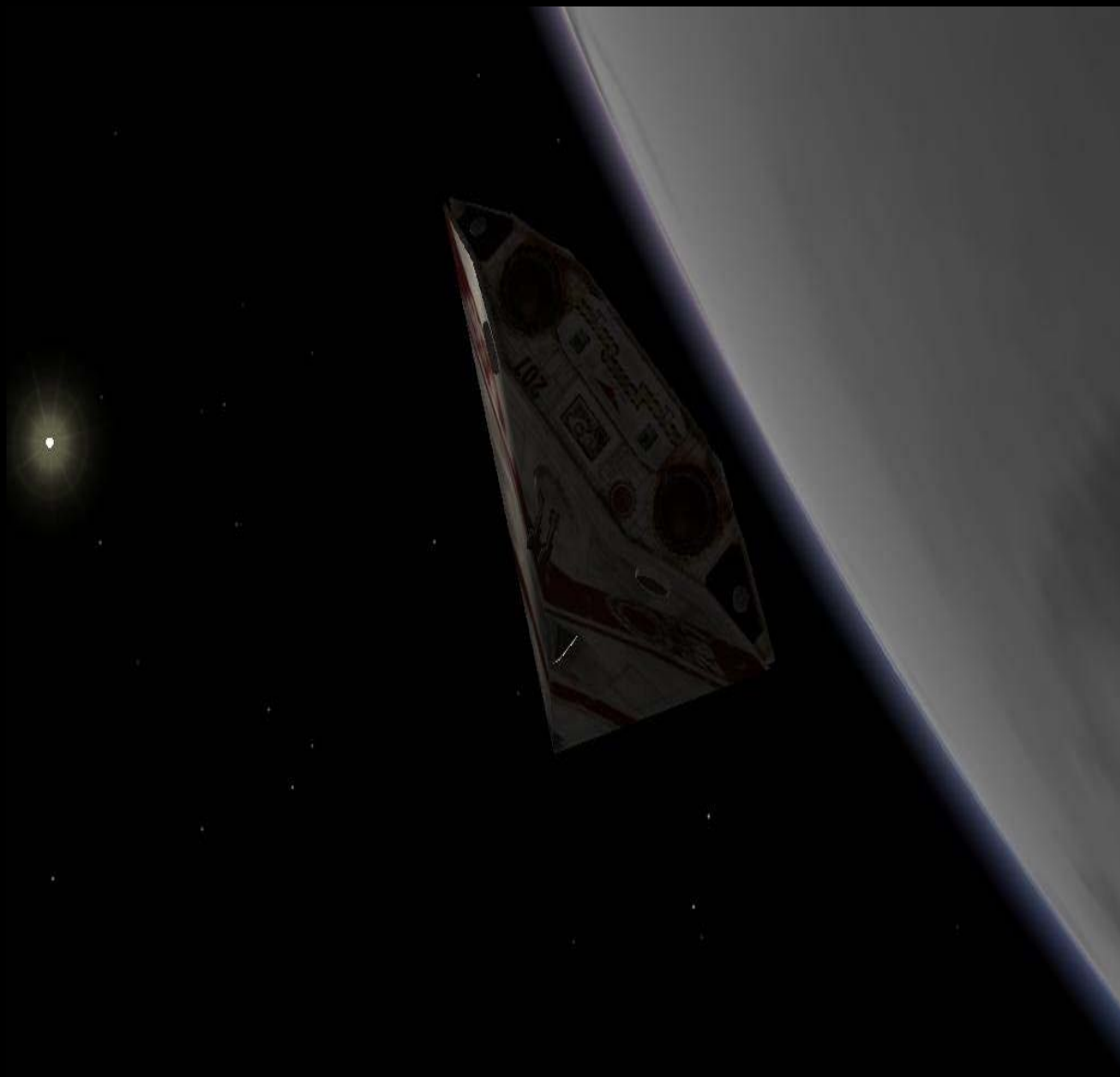


Stellar Reaches

A Fanzine for Traveller T20 And Classic Traveller

Issue #4: Spring 2006



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The Stellar Reaches fanzine's website can currently be found at <http://stellarreaches.nwgamers.org>. Please feel free to browse the site for more information, as well as back issues and other downloads as they become available.

The **BITS Task System**, although modified to include Traveller T20 difficulty classes, has been provided with permission by **British Isles Traveller Support (BITS)**. Its presence here does not constitute any challenge to the rights for this system, and we gratefully acknowledge Dominic Mooney and Andy Lilly for their generosity in allowing our use of this system to allow future adventures to be written in such a manner as to be more useful to all published Traveller rules sets.

For more information on BITS, check out their website at <http://www.bits.org.uk/>

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Letter From The Editor

Greeting, Fellow Sophonts,

First, let me thank all of you for your continued patience as I struggled through life challenges to get this issue of *Stellar Reaches* out for your perusal and enjoyment. While it is a lot of work, I'm happy to say that it is finally complete and ready for release. I hope that you'll enjoy it as much as I do.

While we haven't had a lot of art contributed towards this issue, I must say that what we do have is wonderful. Thomas Dillon returns, this time by providing us with this issue's cover art, "Scout." Also, Bryan Gibson graces us once again with an image he calls "Signal GK." Thanks very much to both of our contributing artists.

You'll notice that there's a lot in this particular issue. Aside from our final article on the Astrography of the Empty Quarter sector in 993, you'll find not one, but two adventures written by fans like yourself. "Hebrin Nights" is Part One of the Lorimar Slot, a double adventure by Mark "Commander Drax" Bridgeman. In it, you'll find a lot of information in the adventure's appendices that help to flesh out the Empty Quarter a little more. "Volander Libre" is a good introductory adventure written by Frank Mikes, and is designed to help bring new players into a Traveller campaign. Wrapping up info on the sector, you can catch Jeff M. Hopper's regular article, "The Empty Quarter Echo," this time focusing on the world of Mikik. Outside the Empty Quarter arena, you'll find a Classic Traveller article on 17 Small Craft, written by the prolific Omer "Employee #2-4601" Golan. For Traveller T20, Christian "Chaos" Schwietzke supplies us with two new prestige classes in a double dose of Prestigious Careers, the Bounty Hunter and the Starport Medic. And of course, we wrap up with an entertaining patron encounter, another contribution from our Ethical Patron contest last year.

Looking forward to the future, you'll notice that we've now completely covered the Empty Quarter sector in 993. While I will continue to support the Empty Quarter in future issues, the main focus of the fanzine will shift to the next sector on the list, the Hinterworlds. Avenger Enterprises will soon be releasing their first sourcebook on the era, **1248 Sourcebook 1: Out of the Darkness**. A high-level map of the OUT circa 1248 can be found as a free download here: <http://www.comstar-games.com/traveller/downloads/High-LEvel-Trav-MaP.pdf>

The Hinterworlds sector were originally covered in the Rebellion Era in a special supplement for Challenge Magazine #39. GDW published a number of adventures and articles on the sector in later issues, creating a small body of work from which to draw on. With the upcoming release of 1248, I would like to ask fans to help me create a **Stellar Reaches Special Supplement** for the Hinterworlds sector, set in 1248. I'd like to see a complete gaming resource for the sector released to welcome the introduction of the TNE 1248 era to the Official Traveller Universe. I've already had a lot of assistance from fans in the form of copies of OOP Challenge articles, but I would really welcome some original Hinterworlds adventures and patrons. I'm preparing a basic overview to pass out to interested contributors to help with the process. If you are interested, please send me an outline of your proposed contribution and we'll take it from there. (Please research the existing canon for the Hinterworlds sector before submitting your outline, so that your work is appropriate to the setting.) As always, adventures are most welcome, as are patron encounters, wildlife, amber zones, starships, and anything else that you'd like to see in such a supplement.

I am not putting a release date on the **Stellar Reaches Special Supplement: Hinterworlds 1248** issue until we have an official release of **1248 Sourcebook 1: Out of the Darkness**, though I imagine that the supplement will come out within four months after Avenger releases **Out of the Darkness**. The more contributions I get, the faster I'll be able to get the supplement out.

Thank you all for your continued support and enthusiasm over the **Stellar Reaches** fanzine. I do this for the joy it gives me, and for the ability to contribute to the Traveller community. Your comments and compliments are very much appreciated, as always.

Prepare To Jump,
Jason "Flynn" Kemp
Editor, **Stellar Reaches** fanzine

BITS Task System

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T20 Open Game Content from the article "Extending the Task Resolution System to T20" Copyright 2003, Jason Kemp.

MegaTraveller (MT), Traveller: The New Era (TNE) and Marc Miller's Traveller (T4) all use a graduated system of task difficulty ratings – Average, Difficult, Formidable, etc. 'Classic' Traveller (CT) and GURPS Traveller (GT) use modifiers to the task rolls instead. Traveller T20 (T20) uses difficulty classes (DCs) to define target numbers for skill checks. The BITS Task System provides a simplified common ground for all these rule sets, using difficulty ratings with corresponding task modifiers for CT and GT and DCs for T20 as shown in Table 1. The means by which spectacular (GT: critical) success or failure are achieved are defined by the rule set used. Similarly, the GM should apply the rules for special tasks – opposed, co-operative, hasty, cautious, etc. – according to the rule set used. As always, these are only guidelines – the GM may alter any task roll as appropriate to enhance the game.

TABLE 1: TASK DIFFICULTIES

BITS Task Difficulty	T4 Difficulty	T4.1 Difficulty	GT Target Modifier	TNE Difficulty	MT Difficulty	CT Target Modifier	T20 DC
Easy	Easy (Auto)	Easy (1D)	+6	Easy	Simple	-4	10
Average	Average (2D)	Average (2D)	+3	Average	Routine	-2	15
Difficult	Difficult (2.5D)	Difficult (2.5D)	0	Difficult	Difficult	0	20
Formidable	Formidable (3D)	Formidable (3D)	-3	Formidable	Difficult	+2	25
Staggering	Impossible (4D)	Staggering (4D)	-6	Impossible	Formidable	+4	30
Impossible	(5D)	Hopeless (5D)	-9	Impossible	Impossible	+6	35
Hopeless	(6D)	Impossible (6D)	-12	Impossible	Impossible	+8	40

Ex. Maria Charles is forging a complex document, which the GM rules is a Staggering task. Maria has Forgery-4 (GT: Forgery-16, T20: Forgery +18) and the relevant attribute (MT, T4) is INT 10 (TNE: INT 9, T20: 15).

CT: Task success is normally $2D + \text{Skill} \geq 8$. Maria requires $2D + \text{Forgery} \geq 12$ ($8 + 4$ for Staggering difficulty).

Alternatively, the GM may prefer to apply the target modifier as a negative modifier on the dice roll, i.e. $2D + 4 - 4 \geq 8$.

MT: Staggering difficulty is equivalent to MT's Formidable (15+), thus the task is $2D + \text{Skill} + (\text{Stat} / 5) \geq 15$. For Maria this is: $2D + 4 + 2 \geq 15$.

TNE: Staggering difficulty is equivalent to TNE's Impossible, thus the task is $d20 \leq (\text{Skill} + \text{Stat}) \times \frac{1}{4}$. For Maria this is $d20 \leq 3$, i.e. $(9 + 4) / 4$ rounded down.

T4: Maria requires $4D \leq \text{INT} + \text{Forgery}$. (Note that T4's Staggering rating of 3.5D is ignored.)

GT: Maria requires $3D \leq \text{Forgery} + \text{Target Modifier}$, i.e. $3D \leq 16 - 6$.

T20: Maria requires $d20 + 18 \geq 30$. (Note that the INT modifier is already factored into the skill check.)

Task definitions should always be used sparingly – the GM should be able to define the difficulty and required skills and equipment for most tasks using common sense. Where strange skills or equipment are needed, these can usually be listed, without requiring a full task definition. Where a full task definition is required, use the following format (you don't need to use the bold or italics formatting; plain text is fine):

To find a boar:

Difficult Recon (GT: Tracking), or

Difficult Hunting (T20: P/Hunting), or

Formidable Survival

+1 Difficulty if riding at full gallop.

+1 Difficulty if lost.

-1 Difficulty if moving slowly.

Spectacular Success: They have surprised a boar and have one round to act before it reacts.

Success: They have found boar tracks and can begin following them.

Failure: No tracks found.

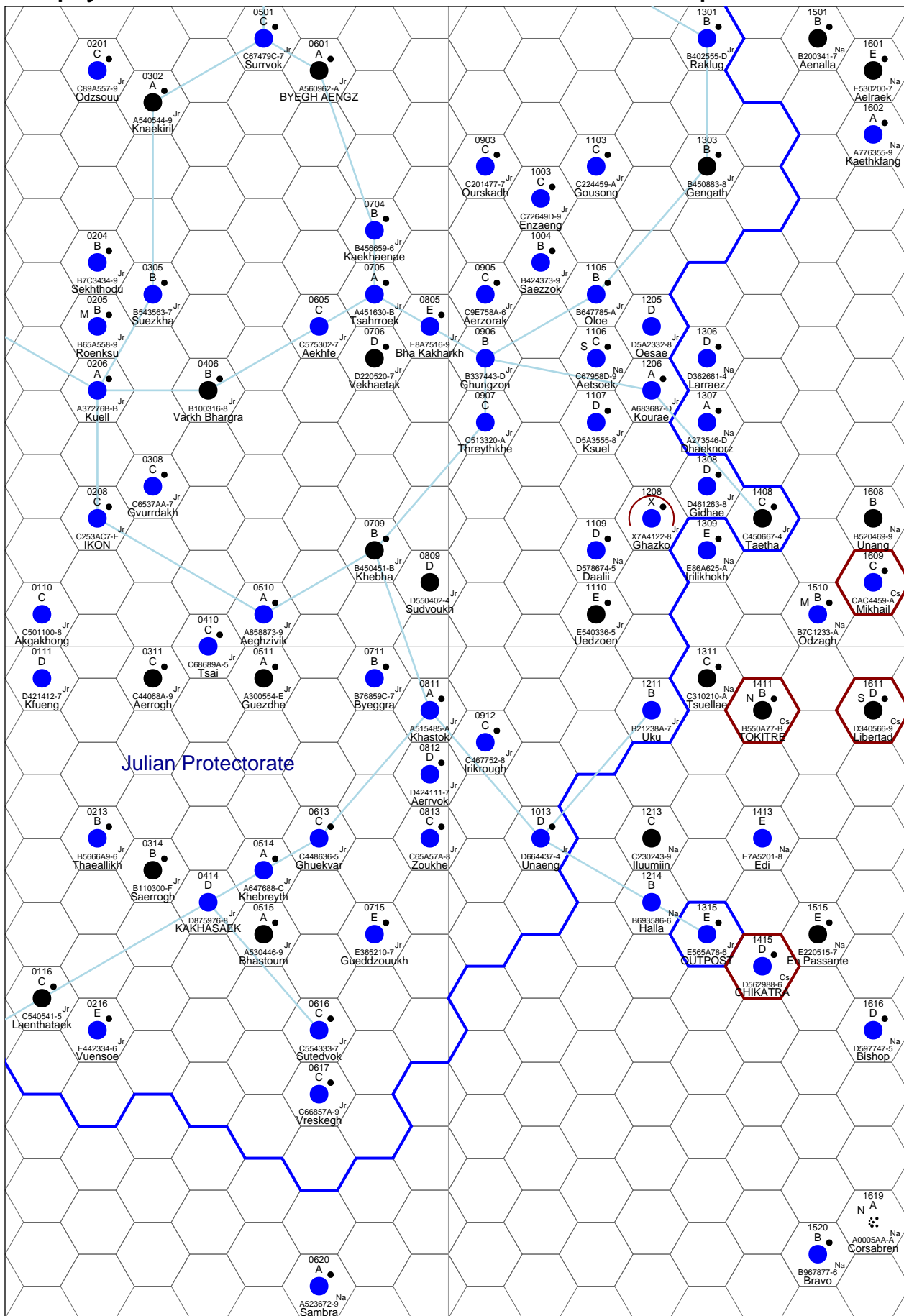
Spectacular Failure: They have become lost.

+1 Difficulty indicates a harder task (e.g. an Average task becomes Difficult) whereas -1 Difficulty is an easier task (e.g. Difficult would become Average).

NOTE: This system has been extensively play-tested but suggestions for refinements are always welcome.

Empty Quarter Sector

Alpha Quadrant



Alpha Quadrant of the Empty Quarter Sector

By Jason “Flynn” Kemp

Introduction

Welcome to our fourth article on the astrography of the Empty Quarter sector in 993! This sector, located just coreward of Ley sector, marks the most coreward-trailing frontier of the Third Imperium. Divided roughly in two by the Lesser Rift, the rimward half of the sector contains the homeworld of one of the most prolific and widespread Minor Races of the Third Imperium, the Bwaps, while two human-Vargr interstellar polities, the Julian Protectorate and the Hegemony of Lorean, claim the coreward region.

This article is the final of four articles that present the details of this interesting sector for enterprising Referees looking for a new and vibrant campaign setting. Two years ago, QuikLink, Inc., released the **Gateway To Destiny Campaign Sourcebook**, which details the Ley, Gateway, Glimmerdrift Reaches and Crucis Margin sectors of the Gateway Domain immediately coreward of Empty Quarter sector. Following suit, the author has decided to follow the example set forth with the **Gateway To Destiny** sourcebook and present the Empty Quarter sector in quadrants. The location of the Empty Quarter sector should allow adventures currently set within Ley sector to explore the Empty Quarter sector as a part of an ongoing campaign. To maintain compatibility with the **Gateway To Destiny** sourcebook, the world data provided below is current as of Imperial Year 993, in what has become known as the Gateway Era or Milieu 1000. The Solomani Rim War is in full swing many sectors to rimward, but its influence can still be felt.

Overview of the Alpha Quadrant of the Empty Quarter

Separated from Imperial space to rimward by the Lesser Rift, the majority of the worlds in this quadrant belong to the Julian Protectorate. Both Vargr and humaniti share the stars in this interstellar polity, along with a significant minority presence of the saurian Hhkar from the neighboring Amdukan sector to coreward and the Bwaps from across the Lesser Rift.

With the Third Imperium engaged in a war far to rimward, the Julian Protectorate focuses on internal issues, unconcerned as to their neighbor's intentions regarding their space. The general consensus among Protectorate citizens is that a Solomani Rim War is a good thing, because it keeps Imperial eyes focused on other regions of space. The Julian War is long over, but a general sense of caution regarding the Third Imperium is a cultural legacy that has been passed down from generation to generation.

Mains & Clusters

The Tsahrroek-Kourae Cluster, the largest cluster of within the Alpha Quadrant, extends from Aekhfē spinward to Taetha trailing, and from Gousong coreward to Uedzoen rimward. Despite the size of this cluster, the more populated worlds of the Alpha Quadrant are not located within it, but are relatively isolated in smaller clusters nearby. The cluster does see a lot of trade traffic, however, given its central location and significant number of agricultural worlds.

The remainder of the Alpha Quadrant is sparsely populated by stars, resulting in a number of small isolated clusters. Jump-2 routes, allowing for well-defined trade routes to evolve, separate many of these clusters. The isolated stellar distribution allows for corsair bands to more easily stake out territory, claiming particular clusters for themselves, but it also localizes such activity, allowing the Star Legion to more easily plot out strategies for dealing with this scourge to interstellar trade and commerce.

World Data By Subsector

Details of the basic world data for the worlds of the Alpha Quadrant of Empty Quarter sector are provided below, arranged in individual subsectors for familiarity and ease of reference.

A) Tsahrroek Subsector

The Tsahrroek subsector is home to 21 systems. The most populated planet in the subsector is Ikon, a small world with ten billion inhabitants. Ikon possesses TL14 technology, the highest in the subsector.

Name	Basic Data	Base	Remarks	TZ	PBG	All	Stellar Data
Akgakhong	0110 C501100-8		Ic Lo Ni Va		810	Jr	M3 V M8 D
Odzsouu	0201 C89A557-9		Ni Wa		423	Jr	M6 VI M2 D
Sekhthodu	0204 B7C3434-9		Fl Lo Ni		624	Jr	M0 V M8 D
Roensku	0205 B65A558-9	M	Ni Wa		622	Jr	M9 V
Kuell	0206 A37276B-B				624	Jr	M7 III
IKON	0208 C253AC7-E		Hi		103	Jr	M4 V
Knaekiril	0302 A540544-9		De Ni Po		523	Jr	G2 V
Suezkha	0305 B543563-7		Ni		823	Jr	M7 V
Gvurrdakh	0308 C6537AA-7				703	Jr	K3 V
Varkh Bhargra	0406 B100316-8		De Lo Ni Va		124	Jr	M5 V
Tsai	0410 C6868CA-5		Ri		213	Jr	K3 II M3 V
Surrvok	0501 C67479C-7		Ag		601	Jr	A0 IV
Aeghzivik	0510 A858873-9				701	Jr	K0 V
BYEGH AENGZ	0601 A560962-A		De Hi		434	Jr	M0 V K0 D
Aekhfē	0605 C575302-7		Lo Ni		220	Jr	M4 V
Kaekhaenae	0704 B456659-6		Ag Ni		202	Jr	K6 VI
Tsahrroek	0705 A451630-B		Ni Po		425	Jr	K3 V
Vekhaetak	0706 D220520-7		De Ni Po		824	Jr	K0 VI M4 D
Khebha	0709 B450451-B		De Lo Ni Po		624	Jr	G9 V
Bha Kakharkh	0805 E8A7516-9		Fl Ni		824	Jr	M4 V M4 D
Sudvoukh	0809 D550402-4		De Lo Ni Po		620	Jr	K5 V M6 D

B) Kourae Subsector

At twenty-eight stellar systems, the Kourae subsector is the most densely packed region of space in the Alpha Quadrant. The border world of Gengath supports 100 million sophonts, giving it the highest population in the subsector. The highest tech levels in the subsector can be found at Ghungzon, Kourae, Raklug and Dhaeknorz, each with a TL13 infrastructure.

Name	Basic Data	Base	Remarks	TZ	PBG	All	Stellar Data
Ourskadh	0903 C201477-7		Ic Lo Ni Va		323	Jr	M4 V M8 D M2 D
Aerzorak	0905 C9E758A-6		Ni		124	Jr	K5 V
Ghungzon	0906 B337443-D		Lo Ni		100	Jr	M4 V M4 D
Threythkhe	0907 C513320-A		Ic Lo Ni		300	Jr	M7 V M7 D
Enzaeng	1003 C72649D-9		Lo Ni		725	Jr	M8 VI
Saezzok	1004 B424373-9		Lo Ni		124	Jr	A1 II G1 D
Gousong	1103 C224459-A		Lo Ni		233	Jr	M3 V
Oloe	1105 B647785-A		Ag		225	Jr	M2 V M2 D
Aetsoek	1106 C67958D-9	S	Ni		522	Na	M4 IV
Ksuel	1107 D5A3555-8		Fl Ni		525	Jr	M8 VI
Daalii	1109 D578674-5		Ag Ni		825	Na	K3 V M9 D
Uedzoen	1110 E540336-5		De Lo Ni Po		512	Jr	K9 D M9 D
Oesae	1205 D5A2332-8		Fl Lo Ni		900	Jr	M1 V
Kourae	1206 A683687-D		Ni Ri		503	Jr	M8 V
Ghazko	1208 X7A4122-8		Fl Lo Ni	R	624	Jr	G6 V M2 D
Raklug	1301 B402555-D		Ic Ni Va		122	Jr	M7 V
Gengath	1303 B450883-8		De Po		134	Jr	M7 V K7 D
Larraez	1306 D362661-4		Ni Ri		721	Na	M0 V
Dhaeknorz	1307 A273546-D		Ni		802	Na	K0 V
Gidhae	1308 D461263-8		Lo Ni		134	Jr	G7 V M3 D
Irilikhokh	1309 E86A625-A		Ni Wa		523	Na	K7 V M2 D
Taetha	1408 C450667-4		De Ni Po		123	Jr	K6 VI
Aenalla	1501 B200341-7		De Lo Ni Va		623	Na	G3 V
Odzagh	1510 B7C1233-A	M	Fl Lo Ni		923	Na	M3 VI M7 D
Aelraek	1601 E530200-7		De Lo Ni Po		602	Na	M6 V M6 D
Kaethkfang	1602 A776355-9		Lo Ni		702	Na	G8 IV M4 VI
Unang	1608 B520469-9		De Lo Ni Po		200	Na	M5 III
Mikhail	1609 CAC4459-A		Fl Lo Ni		634	Cs	M9 V M4 D

E) Kakhasaek Subsector

Kakhasaek subsector is home to nineteen systems, all but one of which is recognized as a member state of the Julian Protectorate. Much of the subsector's population is concentrated on Kakhasaek (with one billion inhabitants). TL15 technology, the highest in the subsector and in the Empty Quarter sector, can be found at Saerrogh, a world owned

and protected by the Saerrogh pack, named for a famous corsair band of local renown a few centuries ago whose descendants now own the world outright.

Name	Basic Data	Base	Remarks	TZ	PBG	All	Stellar Data
Kfueng	0111 D421412-7		Lo Ni Po		700	Jr	M5 V M2 D
Laenthataek	0116 C540541-5		De Ni Po		902	Jr	M2 III
Thaeallikh	0213 B5666A9-6		Ag Ni		723	Jr	K2 III
Vuensoe	0216 E442334-6		Lo Ni Po		402	Jr	M4 V
Aerrogh	0311 C44068A-9		De Ni Po		923	Jr	M4 V
Saerrogh	0314 B110300-F		De Lo Ni		113	Jr	M2 V M2 D
KAKHASAEK	0414 D875976-8		Hi In		110	Jr	K9 VI M1 D
Guezdhe	0511 A300554-E		De Ni Va		212	Jr	M9 V M9 D
Khebreyth	0514 A647688-C		Ag Ni		112	Jr	M7 V M7 D
Bhastoum	0515 A530446-9		De Lo Ni Po		523	Jr	G9 VI M4 D
Ghuekvar	0613 C448636-5		Ag Ni		834	Jr	K5 V
Sutedvok	0616 C554333-7		Lo Ni		503	Jr	K9 VI
Vreskegh	0617 C66857A-9		Ag Ni		424	Jr	K2 II
Sambra	0620 A523672-9		Na Ni		824	Na	M1 V M9 VI M3 D
Byeggra	0711 B76859C-7		Ag Ni		624	Jr	M8 V M9 D
Gueddzouukh	0715 E365210-7		Lo Ni		412	Jr	M1 III
Khastok	0811 A515485-A		Ic Lo Ni		424	Jr	G2 VI M9 D
Aerrvok	0812 D424111-7		Lo Ni		303	Jr	M0 V
Zoukhe	0813 C65A57A-8		Ni Wa		102	Jr	M6 V

F) Tokitre Subsector

The least dense subsector of the Alpha Quadrant, the fifteen systems of the Tokitre subsector hold the greatest concentration of people in the entire quadrant. The populations of just three worlds, Outpost (with 90 billion sophonts), Tokitre (with 80 billion sophonts) and Chikatra (with a billion sophonts), total more than the populations of the other three subsectors all together. Despite the high population, however, Tokitre is rather backwards technologically speaking. Tokitre's industrial infrastructure supports TL11 technology, the highest in the subsector.

Name	Basic Data	Base	Remarks	TZ	PBG	All	Stellar Data
Irikrough	0912 C467752-8		Ag Ri		824	Jr	M0 V
Unaeng	1013 D664437-4		Lo Ni		922	Jr	G3 D M8 D
Uku	1211 B21238A-7		Ic Lo Ni		400	Jr	M4 V
Iluumiin	1213 C230243-9		De Lo Ni Po		700	Na	M3 V
Halla	1214 B693586-6		Ni		500	Na	K7 V M4 D
Tsuellae	1311 C310210-A		De Lo Ni		114	Na	M2 VI M3 D
OUTPOST	1315 E565A78-6		Hi		925	Jr	K5 VI M9 D M8 D
TOKITRE	1411 B550A77-B	N	De Hi Po		824	Cs	F4 D M2 D
Edi	1413 E7A5201-8		Fl Lo Ni		200	Na	K7 V
CHIKATRA	1415 D562988-6		Hi		123	Cs	M8 V
En Passante	1515 E220515-7		De Ni Po		523	Na	M8 V
Bravo	1520 B967877-6		Ri		124	Na	G9 V
Libertad	1611 D340566-9	S	De Ni Po		522	Cs	M7 V
Bishop	1616 D597747-5		Ag		124	Na	M3 V M3 D M8 D
Corsabren	1619 A0005AA-A	N	As Ni		900	Na	G8 IV

Empty Quarter Library Data

Travellers in the Alpha Quadrant of the Empty Quarter sector can commonly access most of the following information via ship computer databanks or starport library kiosks. This data may be considered accurate as of Imperial Year 993. Additional library data of interest can be found in Issues #1-3 of **Stellar Reaches**, which should be available for download from the fanzine's website.

Aeghzivik (Empty Quarter 0510 A858873-9): Although the world of Aeghzivik is home to both Vargr and human, local laws and customs consider humans to be second class citizens. While human offworlders may apply for certain exemptions, in general it is best advised for a human to visit Aeghzivik without a very charismatic Vargr companion. Adherents to the Church of the Chosen Ones religious movement maintain a strong presence here, particularly in the theocratic nation of Soervadoek, which maintains the primary starport for the system.

Byeggra (Empty Quarter 0711 B76859C-7): The population of the neutral world of Byeggra prefers autonomy and self-government to the strictures of either the Hegemony of Lorean or the Julian Protectorate proper. Although originally settled by both Solomani and Vilani during the end of the Rule of Man, the world has been ruled for the last four centuries by a bloodline descended from the minor Vilani merchant house Kukurasiiila, Under Kukurasiiilan

influence, Byeggra culture emphasizes the traditions and mindset of the original Vilani settlers. While some Vargr and other humans have settled on the planet as well, the bureaucratic elite are still relatively pure Vilani genetically. Members of the upper class will frequently seek marriage partners from offworld of pure Vilani strain out of respect for Kukurasiilan traditions. Originally, this practice was implemented to encourage genetic purity while avoiding inbreeding. Marriage arrangement and marriage partner location services are thus considered time-honored occupations on Byeggra.

Church of the Chosen Ones: A religious movement founded about eighty years ago, the Church of the Chosen Ones quickly became very popular in many sectors of the Vargr Extents. The Church's canon promotes the belief that the Vargr were uplifted over many centuries by the god-like Ancients to become the perfect race and the perfect rulers of this region of space, and as such are due all the rights and honors owed to superior beings of this perfected state. Naturally, this belief system advocates Vargr supremacy and non-Vargr subjugation among its many tenets. More popular in the spinward half of the Vargr Extents, the Church still attracts a significant minority of fanatical supporters within the Protectorate itself, despite the generally racial acceptance promoted in Julian society.

Daalii (Empty Quarter 1109 D578674-5): Once a proud and vibrant world, Daalii is slowly recovering from the conflict that left it a desolate battlefield and nuclear wasteland over a century ago. The current generation of Daalii tend to hold a grim and pragmatic outlook, counting only on their own blood, sweat and tears to bring about the changes needed to make Daalii more habitable for their people. There is a strong anti-corsair undercurrent prevalent in the locals, given that mercenary corsair bands brought and detonated the nuclear devices that tainted their world's atmosphere.

Halla (Empty Quarter 1214 B693586-6): Sustaining a culture devoted to racial equality, the world government of Halla requires that a Vargr and human couple, engaged in a panet relationship, fill all upper level administrative and political positions. While the original intent was to provide insight across racial barriers, the arrangement has, in this case at least, provided an increased governmental stability through the synergy of Vargr and human psychologies. Unlike the turbulent past of its interstellar neighbors, Halla has avoided the seemingly routine transition to and from a balkanized state that other worlds in the Protectorate have suffered.

Hegemony of Lorean: An affiliate state of the Julian Protectorate, the Hegemony of Lorean controls a significant number of member worlds in the "four corners" region of Empty Quarter, Amdukan, Arzul and Star's End sectors. Despite the number of worlds under their rule, the Hegemony of Lorean has limited influence with the Julian Protectorate due to its limited ability to trade with other major trading or diplomatic entities. Within the Hegemony, however, the polity focuses most of its own political priorities on local development.

Although the Hegemony of Lorean attempts to pursue relations with the K'kree outposts to trailing, the K'kree in general have expressed disinterest in the matter. Nonetheless, the Hegemony continues to promote such relations, in the hopes that regular trade between the K'kree and the various affiliate states of the Julian Protectorate would increase both the importance and the influence of the Hegemony in interstellar affairs.

Irikrough (Empty Quarter 0912 C467752-8): Irikrough is a rich garden world, home to eighty-two million sentient beings. The planet maintains a strong position in the interstellar economy as a primary source of biopharmaceutical products in the quadrant, including the limited processing of certain low-grade natural anagathics, and supports a lot of interstellar trade with other worlds with greater medical needs. In recent years, a large minority of the local population has become vocal against the ecological impact that the biopharmaceutical industry has had on areas near urban communities, though there are conflicting reports as to the actual extent of the damage to the biosphere.

Julian Protectorate: A response to Imperial aggressions during the Julian War (175 to 191), this interstellar polity neighbors the Imperium. In its loosest definition, the Julian Protectorate is a trade confederation and defense alliance of worlds within the "four corners" region of Mendan, Amdukan, Empty Quarter and Antares sectors. All member worlds (and in some cases individual member nations on balkanized worlds) conduct their own diplomacy and maintain their own armed forces, giving little power to the central authority of the Julian Protectorate on Asimikigir (Amdukan 0223 A684A87-E). The Protectorate, however, does give structure to the community of states. It mediates disputes, provides a set of interstellar laws, and promotes communication and cooperation. It also has a standing armed service, the Star Legion, used for patrols and in crisis situations.

While Vargr and humans populate the Julian sectors in almost equal proportion, the distribution is not homogeneous. Individual world populations vary widely in their human/Vargr ratios. As a rule, though, Vargr are less common closer to Gashikan sector. Other races also exist in the protectorate, but humans and Vargr clearly

predominate. Most others tend to remain on their respective homeworlds. Two additional races also play an interstellar role: a large, somewhat aggressive saurian race called the Hhkar and, to a lesser degree, the Bwaps.

The primary languages of the Julian Protectorate are Galanglic (a dialect of that spoken in the Third Imperium) and Irilitok (a language spoken by most Vargr within the Domain of Antares.)

Koevae Tour: A renowned gambling tournament held once every four years on Oloe. Popular in the Alpha Quadrant, this six-month event hosts a diverse range of gambling events and sports challenges in addition to the main tournament held at the end of the event. Started as a local military tradition in 826, the small yet regular gathering of the former members of a dissolved corsair band has grown into a tournament with a quadrant-wide appeal. Winners of the Tour are often regarded as celebrities and legends in the quadrant's gambling subculture.

Mikhail (Empty Quarter 1609 CAC4459-A): Unsubstantiated rumors of a lost Ancient site hidden under the thick clouds of Mikhail's insidious atmosphere continue to draw questors from parsecs away to launch fruitless expeditions to the planet's surface. Although evidence has been found that suggests the world was inhabited more than 50,000 years ago, no great discoveries or working technology seems to have survived the destructive effects of the planet's atmosphere to the modern day. That doesn't prevent adventurers, thrill-seekers and misguided treasure hunters from making attempts to map and explore the world's surface in search for the so-called Vault of the Lost Ones, named for the subject of an old Vargr spacer's ballad that has been passed down through the generations. The song tells the sad story of a spacer who lost his crew within a vault of wondrous technology after a misjump brought their vessel to the world.

Odzsouu (Empty Quarter 0201 C89A557-9): The water world of Odzsouu is home to a number of contra-grav-supported cities and arcologies. While a sizable minority dwells in orbital facilities far above the planet's surface, many of the locals prefer to dwell closer to the water's surface. Odzsouu Behemoths, the largest native residents of the world, swim in the vast oceans without fear, as many of the local religions attach varying degrees of significance to these "dwellers of the deep." Occasionally, Behemoth hunters perform criminal acts of hunting and slaughtering the beasts, as their rarity and religious significance has attracted undue attention to their flesh in certain black markets of the culinary underworld.

Oloe (Empty Quarter 1105 B647785-A): A vibrant world of casinos, stylized arena combat, live entertainment and other vices, Oloe is a popular tourist stop in the Alpha Quadrant. Not surprisingly, Oloe has developed a reputation as a haven for criminals and the decadent, despite Oloe's extensive media campaigns to the contrary. Most offworld visitors are treated quite well, experiencing many creature comforts at only a slightly inflated cost. The Oloe Regency, the premiere five-star hotel on the world's surface, hosts the subsector's largest gambling tournament, the Koevae Tour, every four years. Although the next Koevae Tour is scheduled to be held in 994, many of the hotels in the downport are already booked well in advance.

Panet Relationships: Within the Julian Protectorate, the level of integration and harmonious relations between human and Vargr can attain significant cultural distinction. On some worlds, it is common for human and Vargr to achieve a relationship whose closeness is matched elsewhere only in the relationship between a person and a pet - except that in the case of the relationship between a human and a Vargr, there is no sense of one member of the relationship being in any way subordinate to the other. On worlds where the panet relationship is practiced, certain social functions require that an attendee bring a panet, much as others require a spouse or a friend of a particular type.

Roenksu (Empty Quarter 0205 B65A558-9): Often regarded as the local capitol for Protectorate affairs within the Alpha Quadrant, the planet of Roenksu has long since been devoted to supporting the ideals of the Julian Protectorate. The Star Legion maintains a fairly large complex on the mainworld, as well as several outer system bases. Protectorate worlds of the Empty Quarter that are in dispute often seek to resolve their issues on Roenksu, moreso due to the Star Legion hierarchy than the Protectorate presence. Many young nobles of Protectorate worlds within six parsecs serve a few years on Roenksu as ambassadors and diplomats as part of their political training and development.

Star Legion: The interstellar navy of the Julian Protectorate, the Star Legion is an interstellar service performing patrols and military actions in crisis situations in support of the Protectorate's member worlds. The Star Legion often works in conjunction with member state's own military forces.

Sambra (Empty Quarter 0620 A523672-9): Located well off the main trade routes, Sambra was colonized in the century immediately before the Julian Wars united the region under the Protectorate. During the Julian War, the local militia captured a misjumped Imperial vessel and used their prize ship to defend their homeworld from interstellar attack through the remainder of the War. Afterwards, as repair parts became harder to come by, the local world government finally decided to land the ship (formerly the *ISS Fury of New Phoenix*, before it was captured and renamed as the *Vaerek-Sourens*), and convert the hull into a museum dedicated to preserving Julian War memorabilia. Today, the Vaerek-Sourens Memorial Museum is the largest museum dedicated solely to commemorating the Julian Wars era in the Empty Quarter sector (and some say the Julian Protectorate, although there's no evidence to back up such claims.) A favorite tourist attraction of historical researchers and retired military personnel within the rimward and trailing portions of the Protectorate, the museum is perhaps the only major attraction on an otherwise backwater planet.

Sudvoukh (Empty Quarter 0809 D550402-4): Sudvoukh is a rocky desert world, barely capable of supporting life above some basic molds, fungi and life of a similar nature. Long ago, several nearby worlds used Sudvoukh as a penal colony for various types of prisoners. Over the decades, the few survivors that managed to eke out a life on the barren plains of Sudvoukh formed tribes of roaming scavengers that compete for rare local resources such as water and control over the fungal fields that provide nourishment. The Star Legion maintains regular patrols in the system, as it is rumored that corsairs bands such as the recently successful Aengsoekkuervoe have been recruiting raiders and boarding troops from the hardened tribal warriors.

Closing Notes & Credits

The Gateway Era world data above was regressed from data developed by the author for the Empty Quarter sector during the Classic Traveller Era, circa 1105. The original Classic Era data complies completely with GDW's **Atlas of the Imperium**. (Fans of DGP's alien supplement, **Vilani & Vargr: The Coreward Races**, will notice that some of the world positions differ from the dot map found within that book. There were some differences in system locations between **Atlas of the Imperium** and **Vilani & Vargr: The Coreward Races**. Where differences existed, the author chose to follow the **Atlas of the Imperium** as his first source of canonicity.

Although the Gateway Era world data given above does not exactly match that of the **Atlas of the Imperium** in terms of population and starports, this is simply due to the regression applied to the Classic Era data to account for the passage of over a century between the Gateway Era and the Classic Era. The original world data does match that source.

All world names, save those found within the **Atlas of the Imperium** or referred to in prior Traveller canon, were generated from Vilani, Vargr and Bwap language tables, or were picked from Arabic, Hindi and Native American names, with a few exceptions based on world isolation. The author assumed that this region of space was settled during the late First Imperium by the Vilani. A second wave of colonists followed during the Rule of Man, primarily comprised of the Middle East and India cultural regions, with a solid minority from descendants of several Native American tribal nations. The history of the Vilani-Vargr integrated nature of the Julian Protectorate and spinward regions of the Hegemony of Lorean allowed for a mixture of both Vilani and Vargr names in the coreward half of the sector.

Information on the two non-Imperial polities was inspired by an article in **Challenge #49** on the Julian Protectorate. Information on the Bwap minor race is based on canon set forth in the original Bwap article from **Journal of the Traveller's Aide Society #11** and the Bwap racial write-up found in **GURPS Alien Races IV**. The author fully acknowledges these sources of inspiration and information, and intends no infringement or challenge of the copyright of any and all entities involved in the creation of those original sources.

Adventure: Hebrin Nights

Part One of The Lorimar Slot By Mark "Commander Drax" Bridgeman

Required Materials

ISSUE 2 Stellar Reaches

Background

This adventure takes place in the Empty Quarter sector of the Imperium, some time after the Imperial Year 990. Not all things are well within humaniti's largest and most stable stellar empire. The Empty Quarter has always been a sector on the edge, thanks to its mixed population made up mainly of Humans, Vargr and Bwaps the racial tensions of which frequently boil over into skirmish level actions in response to the latest corsair raids or perceived injustices. This situation has been exacerbated somewhat with the critical drain of personnel and ships being sent to the distant Solomani Rim to support the ships of the line engaged in battle there, striving valiantly to push the Solomani back into their own space. Sensing weakness Vargr corsairs are now more common than they used to be, making it dangerous for merchant and courier vessels to ply the star lanes, resulting in a down turn of traffic as most sane minded commercial ship owners head in to the safer environs of the Imperial Core or the Stable Territories of the mighty Julian Protectorate, the only known state to have defeated the Imperium, its Star Legion taking up the slack, patrolling the independent worlds and systems formally visited by Imperial Vessels.

Introduction

In the midst of this chaos, the player characters will be approached by a distinguished though ordinary looking human who introduces himself as Davlan Polaris. He explains that recently he was in the employment of Sir Darren Thranber of Mordeki (C98A588-8 - Empty Quarter/Gimishui 1633) as an estate manager, though is a member of the Polaris family, (quasi famous in the area for running a large successful shipping company), who own Polaris Lines. Davlan explains that whilst conducting his duties on Mordeki, the news reached him through a secure X-boat transmission that the Polaris Headquarters on Cooke had been assaulted from orbit, by an unknown warship. The attack completely destroyed the HQ and most of the employees working inside. Unfortunately his family being senior board members were all present for a meeting. The authorities have not yet released any details of the deceased and Davlan fears the worst. Hence his desire to return to Cooke (Empty Quarter/Hebrin 2030 A868837 – 9) as quickly as possible. Davlan will wish to charter the character's ship for standard rates with a 40% bonus if they simply refuel at each destination along route and move on, minimizing travel time. Davlan is extremely wealthy and can easily afford this, though his options are limited due to the down turn in shipping in the area which explains his need for the player character's ship

If the Character's agree or renegotiate the offer he will pay a little more, then get his gear aboard and insist that they lift as soon as possible. Whilst travelling Davlan will socialize with the crew, though will spend vast amounts of time in his cabin going over any and all news and entertainments transmissions received by the vessel when in normal space between jumps. If asked he will explain that he is sifting the channels for mention of his family or media updates regarding the attack on his family's business. A result of this is that characters will be exposed to a number of breaking news items or rumors along route, either as a direct result of the news and communications feeds or when dealing with starport functionaries and port workers etc. See Appendix 2- Rumours for details, culminating with the breaking news item regarding a second attack on Polaris Lines.

The Magnum Opus

On arrival in the Cooke System Davlan will access his quarter's comm system to contact any remaining Polaris offices or facilities within the locality. After placing a few calls and coping with the annoying time lag, he will get through to a Polaris executive named Sandra Winchester who has been holding the company together since the initial attacks, basing herself in a regional office on Cooke's vast southern continent of Terra Australis. The message from Sandra will confirm Davlan's worst fears. He is all that remains of his immediate family and is now the de facto owner of Polaris Lines. Sandra will also inform Davlan that a Polaris Liner called the Magnum Opus was

destroyed in an audacious attack in the Hebrin System about a week ago, taking out a large portion of Loren Highport with it, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of spacers, local personnel and visitors. The Imperial Ministry of Justice (MOJ) has launched an investigation and is questioning the few surviving crewmembers who were not aboard (or indeed anywhere near the ship when it exploded). Though initially they believed the disaster to have been an accident, they have very quickly released details to the hungry news crews and TAS journalists suggestive of Terrorist Activity. Sandra will confirm that she is cooperating with the MOJ investigators on Cooke. When the transmission is over Davlan will inform the player characters, explaining to them that the Magnum Opus was a very old Planetoid Liner, displacing a 1000 tons had minimal jump and maneuver capacity and was profitable though out dated, having been built in the Hebrin System nearly 50 years ago. If asked to explain how he knew this, he will simply explain that he was offered the position of Owner Aboard many years ago, but he turned it down, choosing to return to his true vocation of serving the Imperial Aristocracy. Davlan will be quite upset at the news, having known many of the crewmembers personally. A few hours later the player's ship will receive an incoming transmission from Sandra who will find it easier to speak now that the light lag is not so severe. She will explain that she has had a suite made available at the 'Starport Tower' a luxury hotel that operates within the port extrality zone, stating that she is on her way to meet Davlan and his 'employees' at the port.

1st Plot Point

On arrival at the Port, there will be no sign of Sandra, though enquiries with the 'Tower Hotel' will confirm their reservations with the executive suite having been made available for them. Davlan will ask the crew to accompany him to the suite after they have cleared customs and secured the ship. On arrival at the Towers, again there will be no sign of Sandra, though the suite is reserved and ready for them. On entry into the suite the players will be confronted by a very dead looking Sandra Winchester, draped over a comfortable looking couch, having been shot through the head, with the cauterized wound indicative of a laser discharge. A number of thugs (to match party strength) will be secreted within the suite in semi concealment, (more for cover than stealth) and will open fire on them as soon as the door closes. They are keen to keep noise to a minimum using laser weapons or gauss pistols as opposed to conventional ballistic firearms. The thugs are members of the Cybes (a growing gang culture on Hebrin linked to organized crime), that use the gains from illegal activities to enhance their bodies through the use of cybernetic devices. See Appendix 1 – NPCs for Details.

The battle should be short and sweet, with a few panicked shots on both sides, should the Cybes face 'significant resistance' they will withdraw to the rear of the suite, which exits out onto a air/raft pad, mercilessly killing any of their number that are wounded and can't be moved (to prevent them talking). Before escaping in an air/raft that flies at breakneck speed, over the port, narrowly missing some incoming ships before breaching the port perimeter, at which point the port's auto defenses will open up and shoot the air/raft from the sky in blaze of fire. The Imperium takes a dim view of those who would interfere with Interstellar shipping! The port will then be locked down, with departures and landings stopped whilst the port authority conducts an investigation in close cooperation with the local enforcers. Should there be any bodies in the suite, characters should notice the glaringly obvious cybernetic 'enhancements' such as sighting lenses (linked to handguns) grafted over eyes, ears being replaced with artificial variants (designed to increase sensitivity) and neural jacks clumsily attached to nerves running through, hands, arms, legs, the neck etc.

Given the seriousness of the incident, the local enforcers will insist that the player character's do not attempt to go off world until the investigation is complete. Davlan will apologize to the player characters for getting them 'into this mess' and insist that they stay with him at his family estate. He will use the comm net to make a few calls and within an hour or so, a large bulky enclosed air/raft will arrive to take the party to Davlan's estate on the southern continent of Terra Australis. Like most 'pleasure' vehicles the air/raft has large view ports and will give a spectacular view of the island port of Magellan when it lifts before entering the turbulent clouds at maximum speed.

Davlan's Estate

Davlan's Estate is a huge and sprawling affair of four rectangular towers joined together by walkways, with landing pads on the roof and a vast vehicle garage in the basement. The estate is surrounded by thousands of hectares of tropical wilderness that teems with indigenous life. The wheeled and tracked vehicles resident in the basement are used to patrol and maintain the estate, whilst air/rafts are used to maintain links with civilization. The following Day, Davlan will ask the characters to join him in one of the many meeting rooms and bring them up to date, regarding the police investigation and offer them a proposal. In short Davlan has cleared it through the use of his family's contacts and business associations to allow the characters to be able to travel freely off world. He has also learned that the Ministry of Justice has shut down all Polaris Operations in the Hebrin Subsector in response to scandalous claims of slave trading, organ harvesting and piracy, pending investigation. Davlan fears that whilst the company is grounded that rival operators will move in and take over key contracts and Polaris routes. Davlan plans

to keep the company going by hiring independents to work the Polaris routes, in which they will be allowed to keep any profits made, and have discounted use of Polaris facilities such as fuel and maintenance in addition to company secrets and trade tips and a hefty performance related bonus based on levels of customer satisfaction, such independents will also get a sanitized copy of the Polaris Database which should assist them in their efforts to work profitably. Davlan anticipates that the MOJ investigation will last six months and will end with all charges against Polaris being dropped, which should result in hefty amounts of compensation being paid to the company from the Imperium to make up for lost profits. Hence for the time being he will be happy to pay the independents out of his own private fortune.

The deal he offers the players is as follows, change the ship's livery to Polaris colours, travel around the regular Polaris routes for six months recruiting independents to take over the trade and transport duties of the company for the terms outlined whilst working as special corporate investigators. In order to assist them he has set up an x-boat transmission to go in all directions as an advertisement to all independent ship owners. He is dispatching key employees to nearby star systems as quickly as he can to appoint agents capable of handling the offer along with the prospective franchisees..

Should the characters accept their bargain the first mission will be simple, get to the bottom of the mystery surrounding the current lock down of Polaris Lines and find the real people behind the scandalous accusations made against the line, whilst recruiting independents along the way, sending regular reports back to Cooke through the X-boat network. At the end of the investigation they will get a Mcr1 bonus. In order to keep their ship flying, Davlan will pay all ship expenses and put them his new investigators on the company payroll at standard rates with a 25% bonus as hazard pay. If the players have the chance to make any additional money along the way without compromising their primary mission then he will allow them to keep it.

As the starting point Davlan will ask them to travel to Hebrin and meet the surviving crewmembers of 'The Magnum Opus' and deliver a private communication to them revealing the details of a secret bank account set up to guarantee their wages for the next six months, along with instructions to keep them occupied with their time. Davlan will also want the players to interview the crew and send back any findings in order to keep him informed.

In the meantime Davlan plans to visit his families memorials and hire independent mercenary bodyguards to protect him and his staff whilst, he keeps the company going. First of all though he is going to investigate that leak that resulted in Sandra's death by hiring an investigator.

Once they've accepted, Davlan will give the players a data-chip with the last 6 months Polaris related news on it, along with the preliminary findings of the MOJ, which do not look good... The Imperial Patrol Cruiser, 'The Pax Imperica' recently undertook offensive operations in the Camilla system (Empty Quarter 2528 D434342-7) using marines to rescue 12 'Gladiators' all of which were former Polaris Lines passengers that had been forced by their captors to train and fight against their will in a bizarre range of secret tournaments (sometimes to the death) for the pleasure of a network of high level criminals. It is suggested that these crime lords have been making vast amounts of money by encouraging spectators to gamble on the outcome of any one fight. The rescued passengers have provided strong evidence that their ships 'disappeared' under Polaris orders, who have since reported the vessels as MFU (missing fate unknown) to jump failure or piracy. Indeed some of the rescued passengers have claimed to have been aboard the vessels when they attacked other shipping. Also it seems that low berth passengers simply disappear, no one knows why as of yet, though in a related find, an organ installed in a citizen of Hebrin had rejection problems that led surgeons to examine it in depth, the resulting DNA trace was identical to a low berth passenger that had joined the Polaris Liner, the 'Irash Express', which was reported lost with all hands and passengers nearly two and a half years ago.

2nd Plot Point

One jump later the players will arrive in the Hebrin system, which is one of the few star systems in the Imperium in which the sheer volume of radio transmissions and ship signatures will threaten to overwhelm their shipboard array. Most mainworld traffic is directed through Loren Highport which operates an efficient shuttle surface to the surface, that on inspection seems to be little more than a single drab expanse covering the equatorial and tropical regions of the planet, leaving the poles as reserves. Most encounters will consist of twitchy naval vessels, ice-cutters and merchants shipping agricultural produce and water to the surface. The scale of the Hebrin Magalopolis is breathtaking, thin wisps of clouds hang lazily in the atmosphere above a sea of gray human development, punctuated by the odd tiny square of green or brown, marking the occasional park or recreation district.

On approach to the highport, it will be quite easy to see the damage done by the Opus explosion as dirty smear plated over by temporary patches and scaffolding. Entry into the highport itself will be far from routine; the ship's new colors are already causing a stir in the station's traffic control section. Taking no chances the player's ship will be ordered into a parking orbit 200 km off the station, all cargo transfer and passenger embarkation/debarkation will be conducted by tenders. The players will also be ordered to stand down and prepare for boarding as an Imperial

naval cutter will come alongside in order to conduct an inspection with its marine squad, a Naval Ensign and an Army demolitions expert who just happened to be aboard the station at the time. The ship will be inspected from prow to stern, no corners will be left untouched, all cargo will be examined (if any) and all cases checked. Since the Opus Incident, Hebrin has become an Amber Zone, all logs will be copied for examination and reports sent back to the MOJ presence aboard the station. When the navy are satisfied that the ship poses no threat, they will be given clearance to dock at the station, though in an external grapple as opposed to an interior berth.

Next the characters will need to make contact with the surviving crew of the Magnum Opus, who it will transpire are currently in a detention center for their own protection, having been grilled relentlessly by the MOJ investigators on the scene. All that remains of the crew are a few deckhands, the ship's astrologer and Chief Engineer Rayna Villiski, who likes to be called 'Chief'. He is the ranking officer and will be happy to talk to the player characters when he learns that they are working for Polaris Lines. He will reveal that Polaris has been facing some stiff competition in recent years, though has managed to deal with it legally, indeed there was no need to turn to illegal activities with the jump 1 fleet bringing in over Mcr100.0 in revenues each year, simply by plying the main around Hebrin. Their most active competitor is Majestic Lines, based out of Niketan (Empty Quarter 2434 A650467-E) who have been somewhat desperate of late and are rumored to be in financial difficulties. Indeed they have proposed on several occasions to form a merger or partnership with Polaris, though 'the old man' (Davlan's Father and CEO) was too aggressive, refusing the merger, being convinced that he could drive Majestic out of business. It was some time later that ship crews started getting anonymous death threats and increased difficulties with customs inspections, not to mention higher docking fees in certain places or subtle increases in the cost of maintenance. It seems that Majestic had entered into a very subtle trade war, as nothing could really be proven. Shortly afterwards, the first Polaris Liner disappeared, being the type M vessel called the 'Irash Express'. An official investigation determined that the ship must have been lost in a misjump, as it has not been sighted since its last transition from Shuiku (Empty Quarter 2134- B575656-A) to Irash (Empty Quarter 2036 C99799B-A), some two and a half years ago. Four other ships belonging to Polaris have since disappeared.

When Rayna receives the private message from Davlan he will at once be relieved, for a number of reasons, Davlan is still paying them a wage and wants them to return to Cooke for redeployment aboard a new vessel, not yet completed. It seems that they are to make up the crew of the 'Golden Venture' being one of those recently designed Lorimar Class Merchant Cruisers. The 'Venture' is currently under construction in Niketan, that whilst not profitable as a freighter or spec trader is a design built from the keel up for exploratory trade, which Davlan like the previous CEO who ordered the build, considers to be vital for the company's future. Whilst the ship hasn't been finished yet, it should be by the time that Rayna and his people obtain passage and get to Niketan some 7 parsecs to trailing/rimward. Within a few hours of this interview Rayna and his crew will be cheerfully released by the authorities who are pleased that they've got somewhere to go and they are 'off their hands'.

When the Player Characters return to their ship, they will find its docking port barred by two tough looking military types along with an Imperial MOJ investigator, (Agent Reba Harrison) who will order the player characters to co-operate with her and answer her questions, either inside the ship or at a nearby convenient location, such as a bar or hotel complex. She will be very interested in the team's recent adventures and intrigued over the descriptions of the thugs that assaulted them at Magellan downport on Cooke. She will reveal that they are most likely members of the Cybes, a notorious criminal gang/organization that has something of a nasty reputation in the more 'hazardous' parts of Hebrin. Agent Harrison will also ask if the characters are fully aware of the charges against Polaris Lines. She will explain that the company has been locked down, with assets frozen for the duration of the Investigation, she considers Davlan's actions to be misguided at best, especially considering the severity of the complaints against Polaris Lines, as it could lead to complications in the investigation. If the player's ask for more details she will simply tell them to access the local network under 'Polaris' for the news.

Characters should follow this lead and take a shuttle to Hebrin and seek out these 'Cybes' (if they wish to stay true to the mission).

On the surface, Hebrin is breathtaking, at once, decadent and decayed, its infrastructure badly failing, water being rationed amongst the tall high rise buildings, of which only the richest can afford to have it plumbed directly to their dwelling, in direct contrast to the many wailing and competing street sellers, selling, groceries, consumer goods and little vials of water in return for Imperial Credits amongst a sea of street stalls and run down shops. Indeed many traders accept water for payment when credits are short, a few hours exposure to this poverty stricken climate will reveal the existence of a thriving black market in which everything can be found for sale in the more nefarious parts of Hebrin if you've got the credits or the H2O. In direct contrast to this the very richest individuals live their lives in sealed enviro-homes that recycle, air and water indefinitely, venturing out occasionally if their needs cannot be fulfilled through the Intra-Web (the Hebrin extension to the X-boat network and local entertainment system).

Cybes are more or less easy to spot, even casual bribing will result in many different rumors and facts being encountered by the PC's that might lead the characters in the right direction to a semi abandoned district, 500

kilometers north of the enormous Hebrin Mainport. Since Cybes are known to be dangerous, smart characters might think of using their streetwise skills to score some illegal weaponry (as they would not be allowed to leave the starport with anything more deadly than their hands or other manipulatory appendages).

Conflict

Sooner or later characters will hear a muffled voice saying 'I hear you've been looking for us' in which a gang of cybes (matching the PCs for numbers) will ambush the characters, in an uninhabited location such as an abandoned warehouse or run down housing district where the populace are sufficiently cowed that they will not interfere or call the law enforcers. The combat should be brutal, violent and to the death, though staged in a location which has ample cover for both sides, allowing it to be tense or drawn if its suits the mood. If the characters prevail, one or more of the cybes will be injured, left for dead as the others will either have died in the fight or have retreated to get more gang members in order to come back and finish the players off. In which case the characters will have to be quick when interrogating any of the wounded, who at the very least should be slowly dying and thus short of time, in addition to the fact that more gang members will soon return. The cybe will say little except that 'Boss Julien' will kill them all.

The players should then be able to escape the area and after a bit of asking around learn that Boss Julien is one of the gang leaders in the area, known to be a cruel and ruthless man he models himself on his perceived notions of the Imperial aristocracy, holding court and conducting his 'business' dealings from the comfort of an iridium coloured throne. He is frequently heard to say that the emperor won't come to a world like Hebrin, so he intends to rule in his absence... Being the gang leader he has also the most expensive and most obvious of cybernetic enhancements, having shipped in cybernetic surgeons from the high tech worlds of the Quadrant to work on him. Further question should reveal his hideout or command center to be in a rundown penthouse style suite at the top of an accommodation tower. The tower will have been a luxury complex in its early days of grandeur though unfortunately, is presently nothing more than a sardonic reminder of better days and times, all of which occurred several centuries in the past. Discrete observations should reveal Boss Julien's typical movements and a way of entry to the penthouse such as using computer skills and electronic hacking equipment to override the lift to the top floor or hiring an air/raft to fly the party in to the roof garden.

However the players do it, either discretely or by battling their way in, they will eventually arrive in the penthouse 'throne room' in full view of Boss Julien's painted throne. In true regal fashion he will raise his hand and command the fighting (if any to stop). A standoff between the players and the cybe court should ensue in which everyone present (including NPCs) should have at least one weapon trained on them.

He will then tell the players that they are in his presence because (and only because) he has allowed it to happen, stating that he could have had them killed at anytime. He being somewhat egotistic will brag that he and his people are in continuous contact as everyone is fitted with subdermal communicators. He will then calmly state that he knows the exact location of all of his people at any one time and is aware of all of their dealings and meetings, thus he has known about the players for some time. Players may well be tempted to shoot him and his court of modified citizens, but this man has all of the answers the players need, so they should at least hear him out. Boss Julien will attempt to interrogate the players to find out what they know, firstly by initiating a friendly discussion (despite the obvious tensions of the moment with both sides pointing weapons at each other), before ordering his crew to attack if players do not wish to reveal who they are working for and why they are investigating the Cybes. Unfortunately due to the nature of the subdermal communicators the players will be surprised as no vocal command will be given. Should the players survive and prevail, any one of the court should be able to give them the answers they want. Boss Julien was hired by a human 'agent' based in one of the wealthy business areas surrounding the Starport. His name is Hillokho Turishi. Turishi is well known in criminal circles and is believed to have ties to the Shadow Cartel, from this it should be easy to locate Turishi's premises and pay him a visit.

Resolution

There is only one way to get any sense out of man like Turishi and that is to beat him up, he works alone, is a small time criminal with a big mouth, though is well connected to the criminal fraternity. He will initially refuse to 'Squeal' or acknowledge that he has any involvement with the Cybes or the Shadow Cartel, claiming that he is just an honest business man involved in off world transport. Due to his immense fear of his shadow contacts he will bravely resist to the end, however everyman has a weakness, so should player characters be able to convince him that they have captured his family or a member of his family by using some realistic details of his family life (or have really conducted a kidnapping) he will cave in and tell them that he was paid Mcr1.0 by an unknown agent of the Shadow Cartel, to put together a disposable team of muscle to travel to Cooke and 'rough up' any surviving members of Polaris family that are still active in the Family Business. Those agents have not returned to Hebrin, though should have by now (Turishi has no knowledge of the incident at the Starport in which the Cybes were killed

by the starport's automated defenses). At this point the trail will go cold, the Shadow Cartel are so named because they operate in the style of the ancient Vilani Shadow Emperors, by not revealing their identities, projecting only a disguised silhouette of themselves on to any visual recordings or communications.

The next day, the local news channels will be broadcasting all over the net the shocking news of Turishi's death, apparently he was found to have been shot through the head with a gauss pistol at close range. The local police have found evidence of bugging and surveillance at the Turishi's offices, transmitting images and sound to a destination within the starport perimeter. A port wide search is on at present to find the receiving equipment, although this will be fruitless. The player's actions will have led to Turishi's death; clearly his shadow contacts were not happy with his revelations, so they killed him. It goes to show that it isn't always possible to leave a clean space behind you in the Traveller universe...

The players will know that the Cartel are involved in the difficulties faced by Polaris somehow, though be unable to prove it, and will need to come up with another angle of attack if they wish to pursue this avenue. Even more worrying is the fact that Turishi's office was bugged, meaning that the cartel will be aware of them and are at present planning their next move. Will they simply ignore the players or try to frame them for Turishi's murder (by showing the recordings that they must have of the group interrogating him), or will they simply have the players killed. The answers to these questions will be revealed in the next installment of 'The Lorimar Slot'.

Life has suddenly become very worrying for the players....

APPENDIX 1 – NPCs

DAVLAN POLARIS - Mixed Race Human Male – Professional 8th Level, Age 38, Cr86,000

Homeworld: Cooke (Empty Quarter) – 2030 A868837-9

STR:10 (+0) DEX: 10 (-0) CON: 6 (-2) INT:13 (+1) WIS: 12 (+1)

EDU: 11(+0) CHR: 10 (+0) SOC: 14

Skills - Driving -0, K/Interstellar Law -8, Liaison – 8, Leader – 1, P/Administration – 9

Trader – 9, Survival – 9, Broker – 7, Bribery – 5, Bluff – 4, Sense Motive – 1, Disguise – 2

T/Sensors – 4

Feats - Vessel – Wheeled/Grav Vehicles, Carousing, Connections (Family), Credit Line, Trustworthy, Barter,

Armour Proficiency – Vac Suit

Sta/Lb: 27/6 BAB+2 Fort +0 Rfx+2 Will+7

XP: 34,000

Weapon – Dagger, Gold Watch,

Davlan is a quiet and unassuming man, not particularly charismatic, though quite perceptive, having learned much in the years since being sent into Imperial Service by his social climbing family of wealthy merchants. He is 1.8 meters tall and weighs, 73 kg, having short cut fine blond hair and striking blue eyes, he is also quite sickly and prone to injury. Despite being recalled to the family business in his twenties, he didn't really like it too much, preferring the intrigue and adventure, not to mention the prestige of serving the Noble classes, which he returned to at age 34, having remained there ever since as a faithful and loyal estate manager for the local sector duke (a position that pleased his family). When the news of the attacks on the Polaris HQ on Cooke, Davlan has terminated his noble employment in order to return home and assist his family or take over the running of the company if there's no one else left to do it. He is very clearly a rich man capable of calling in favors with the local nobility and additional lines of credit from his families funds, however he is determined to travel as low key as possible and disguise his appearance by wearing low quality clothing and making cosmetic alterations to his appearance (a trick he picked up from his former employer, Sir Darren Thranber), not to mention staying in cheap or low quality hostels or hotels along route. He thinks he may be paranoid but is taking no chances with his life, hence the low profile. He has got Cr86,00 on his person, keeps a jewel encrusted ceremonial dagger in a case (having been required to wear it in the presence of his former noble employer) and hides an expensive solid gold wrist chronometer with built in short range communicator in a travel bag (this was also a gift that was needed to be worn at all times when in Sir Thranber's service).

CT: 776989

Legal -2, Liaison -2, Admin -2, Trader -2, Broker -1, Bribery -1, Sensor Ops -1, Grav Vehicle-0, Wheeled Vehicle -0, Vac Suit -0

REBA HARRISON - Mixed Race Human Female – Traveller 3rd Level/Professional 2nd Level, Age 26, Cr 52,000

Homeworld: Lakea (Empty Quarter 1738 A202623-B)

STR: 10 (+0) DEX: 10 (-0) CON: 11 (-0) INT: 13 (+1) WIS: 15 (+2)
EDU: 10(+0) CHR: 12 (+0) SOC: 12
Skills T/communication -0, T/mechanical
K/Interstellar Law-8, T/Computer-6, T/Sensors-6, Driving-4 Bribery -4, Spot -5, Move Silently -4
Feats: Vessel (Grav), Vac Suit, Low Gravity Adaptation, Hacker, Trustworthy, Tactics I, Armor proficiency (light/Medium), Weapon proficiency (Marksman), Profession Specialty (T/Computers)
Sta/Lb: 20/11 BAB+1 Fort +1 Rfx+2 Will+7
XP: 10,000
Weapon Auto-Pistol

A reasonably competent MOJ investigator sent to gather facts and work in close Liaison with the legal enforcement agencies of the Hebrin System, young, relatively inexperienced, but very perceptive.
CT: 778899

Legal -4, Computer -3, Sensor Ops -3, Wheeled Vehicle -2, Bribery -2, Stealth -2, Tactics -1, Grav Vehicle -0, Vac Suit-0

Cybes – Use the entry for Street Thugs on Page 422 (Rogue Level 6) of THB though they should all gain some cybernetic bonuses such as those physical and vulgar low tech 'upgrades' found on page 221 of THB, such as the use of light arms giving a bonus to strength. Cybes by and large all have subcutaneous communicators linked to their central nervous systems, allowing them to stay in touch out as far as distant range, allowing each other to broadcast any sounds made by themselves or others in their direct presence, just like a leaving a conventional communicator open. The cybes can communicate with each other effectively by whispering with the unit open or can trigger a number of silent commands by thought. These are very simple, such as attack, fall back, flank etc, though are useful enough to give them a considerable tactical bonus in combat.

In addition to the above, they are commonly fitted with some ugly looking implants such as a small bio-sniffer instead of a nose, allowing them to test the purity of illegal narcotics sold or plundered etc, audio sensors grafted over ears +1 to hearing, targeting displays grafted over an eye socket (as opposed to replacing the eye), and linked to the sights of their handguns or rifles by a radio tag (+2 to hit rolls), in addition to allowing them to see around corners if a camera is fitted on the weapon and activated.

Whilst these enhancements are low tech, they are effective and represent a considerable advantage to these cybernetic characters, though are pretty ugly to look at, resulting in between 1 and 6 points reduction in charisma depending upon the location and garishness of the various additions. Such low brow technology costs the same as described on THB page 221, with the minor additions typically installed for Cr5000 each, with no guarantees or warranties being black market sourced.

The Boss Julien Character will of course have the best of these enhancements and most probably look the most bizarre, having paid stolen money for the best he could get locally, this would be equivalent to Tech 10-12, allowing him to have a subcutaneous communicator transmitting out to Very Distant range or possibly greater. All of his senses will be augmented, in some way or another, along with having one or two of his limbs replaced with a stronger or faster version. He also has an interface plate in his right hand (or manipulative appendage) that transmits his ID to his favourite handgun which has been booby trapped to explode its magazine if someone attempts to fire it without the code being present (i.e. Within his grip). This last and most expensive implant cost him a cool Cr25,000 though is useful, having saved his life on a number of occasions. In terms of Stats he will be the equivalent of a 9th level Rogue.

APPENDIX 2 - RUMORS

General Rumors

The K'kree are planning a full scale invasion of Imperial Space, it's only a matter of time...

The history databases are full of lies, the Villani could never have built a trade empire as big as the first Imperium is alleged to have been. The history books were rewritten by the First Emperor Cleon Zhunastu in order to justify the claiming of vast amounts of territory when 'rebuilding the empire'.

Nanotechnology exists I tell you, it's been suppressed by the government since the days of the Sylean Federation. Think about this, The Imperium thrives on trade, allowing a technology that could shatter the law of supply and demand would dissolve this civilisation overnight, nobody would need to buy anything ever again, can you imagine the social changes it would cause. It would be the death of the empire...

Faster than light communications exist, except they won't tell us ordinary citizens, think of the military advantages. Apparently you can modify a meson communicator to strip the particles of its mass, at which point they can exceed light speed.

The Solomani are being aided by some powerful unknown aliens from the Rim.

Hebrin Rumors

The HRF (Hebrin Revolutionary Front) are using money from organised crime to build an army of cybernetic warriors capable of overthrowing the government.

The Cybes & the Slicks are street gangs sponsored by the Solomani to create discord behind our lines.

Bwaps are slowly manipulating Imperial policy and standards of life for us humans by infiltrating and manipulating the Imperial Bureaucracy.

There's something wrong with the latest batch of genetically engineered replacement organs, if they DNA match to you, why do you still need to take immune suppressant drugs to stop your body rejecting them?

Imperial Ministry of Justice agents have swooped on the offices of Lodestar shipping and several rival firms here on Hebrin as part of an Imperial investigation into alleged price fixing and cartel activities.

Anagathics are being made really cheaply here on Hebrin, of course the price is incredibly expensive, with our population problems they only want the rich to live forever...

APPENDIX 3 - LIBRARY DATA

Cybes

A large criminal fraternity made up primarily of dissatisfied and disenfranchised types, usually from the poorer regions of Hebrin's vast and sprawling metropolis. Cybes are known to augment their biological bodies with cybernetic enhancements, hence the slang name 'Cybes'. Such enhancements are expensive hence the need to turn to crime in order to pay for the very latest, must have 'upgrade'. With Hebrin being a relatively low tech world (TL9), such upgrades are painfully obvious, flying in the face of the mainstream imperial climate of opinion that sees these devices as vulgar. Indeed the Cybes predilection for augments that are clearly visible can be construed as a form of rebellion or badge of honour amongst their own unique subclass, that like most subclasses can only exist if other more socially conscious citizens are willing to do the necessary work of maintaining civilization around them. Most of the enhancements favoured by the Cybes offer very little in the way of benefits, being more vulgar, than useful.

Majestic Lines

See Stellar Reaches Issue 2

Slicks

An offshoot of the Cybes, unlike the Cybes, the slicks seek to enhance their bodies by the use of discreet augmentation, not visible under common inspection, on a world like Hebrin these enhancements have to be purchased off world, or imported along with sufficient medical expertise to safely install them, all of which takes vast amounts of money. Thus it is believed that unlike the Cybes the slicks must be made up of hardcore criminal types that have the backing of a larger organization, such as the Shadow Cartel. Indeed discrete cybernetics could be very useful to an organization like the Cartel. Whilst they used to be members of the Cybes, modern day Cybes consider the Slicks to have 'sold out' and betrayed cybe values, preferring to live in secret amongst the 'normals'.

APPENDIX 4 – Worlds & Locations

Cooke A868837 – 9 Im 423 F5V

Primary Port: Class A, Magellan Orbital/Down, Gravity 1.05G, Core: Molten, Axial tilt 0', Orbital Period 2 years 71 d, 12 hrs 57 min, 36 seconds, Rotation Period: 13 h, 40 min, 48 seconds, Day/night length: 6 hr 50 min 24 sec.

Atmosphere: Standard Oxy/Nitro Mix at 1.02 At, hydrographics, 82% liquid water, Indigenous life present, base surface temperature of 46' Celsius. Population, Eight Hundred Million, mixed Human, Vargr and Bwaps,

Government: Self Perpetuating Oligarchy. Law: Moderate (Shotgun's prohibited): Tech – 9 Early Stellar.

Cooke is a stormy world of high winds and heavy rainfalls, much of the surface of which is blanketed by vast banks of clouds covering the equatorial/tropical zones, where rainfall is at it's heaviest. Situated in orbit 4 of Brilliant Light (a white hot, main sequence F5V) Cooke teems with indigenous life, the most varied of which live in it's copious oceans. Some land based life is considered to be semi-intelligent (making Cooke popular with hunters) with some borderline examples of emerging sentience (which are protected species). Cooke has a base surface temperature of 46' Celsius in the tropics, making the equatorial zones too hot and stuffy (due to the humidity and dangerous levels of heat) for human comfort, hence most settlements exist within the cooler planetary regions such as the northern and southern polar zones, where temperatures drop to around 20' Celsius. This world's primary port is called Magellan Downport/Orbital and exists on an artificial island in the midst of the Northern Ocean connected to the nearby landmass of Geo-Terra by high speed maglev trains. Laws are rigidly enforced by the planetary government with all automatic firearms and shotgun's forbidden. Knives and simple (non automatic) pistols are legal for self defense against the indigenous life, much of which is predatory in nature, examples of which occasionally stray into settled zones or are encountered by farmers and settlers trying to tame the wilderness and set up farms to support the needs of the growing populace.

The mixed population of 400,000,000 mixed human, Vargr and Bwaps are generally a progressive and advancing bunch that tend to live in harmony and tolerance of one another, though remain competitive amongst themselves in their business dealings. They tend to be slightly aloof when dealing with off worlders, a trait inherited from their government, the officials of which are forbidden by law from dealing with off-worlders. Also the main stream population and industry are forbidden from using robots as assistants or as labor, in order to maximize employment opportunities for citizens, although Government Officials and Key workers are permitted the use of robots in their work, frequently using expert systems models imported from higher tech worlds to serve as message carriers and intermediaries when the government needs to deal with off worlders in a more 'personal' capacity.

The government is extensive having claimed every other body within the system as it's territory, where extra – planetary facilities exist, they have exactly the same government structure and law levels and use local tech (TL-9). Convicted criminals are prohibited from the use of legal recreational drugs such as alcohol and stims though the enforcement of this is proving difficult.

Cooke has two moons, both small rocky bodies namely Splitter's Rock in orbit 11 and Highport Rock in Orbit 29, which as it's names suggest serves as a very busy dropping off point and orbital port for unstreamlined vessels or those ships that do not want to go deep into Cooke's gravity well and dock at Magellan Orbital. Indeed Highport rock has been recognized by TAS as an independent class C port subordinate to Magellan due to the excellence of it's handling facilities and support it receives from Magellan. The Magellan Orbital Yards are known as an excellent source of tech – 9 spare parts and services and have a good reputation as shipbuilders capable of manufacturing jump 1 ships using local components.

Cooke System Overview

Brilliant Light F5V mass 1.3

Orbit	0	Furnace	X8D0000-0	
	1	Basilisk	G410137-9	1 Moon
	2	Woken Belt	F000337-9	
	3	Sliver Drift	F000437-9	
	4	Cooke	A868837-9	2 Moons
	11	Splitter's Rock	XS00000-0	
	29	Highport Rock	CS00183-9	
	5	Dane's Rest	LGG	11 Moons
	6	Martha	LGG	18 Moons
	7	Salamander	SGG	8 Moons
	8	Potomac	X401000-0	1 Moon
	9	Wasted	X320000-0	

Hebrin (Empty Quarter 1930) B550a88-9 N De Hi Po 423 Im K3 V

'Bursting at the seams with forty-two billion people, the desert world's population challenges the Hebrin Bureaux's ability to provide sustenance and water for its people. Water itself has become a valuable commodity, having to be processed from limited underground reserves or brought in from offworld, harvested elsewhere within the system.

Ice belters, in particular, are in ever-increasing demand, bringing a high level of status and respect to a profession not highly regarded in other areas within the Third Imperium.'

Stellar Reaches – Issue 2

'How the hell anyone could call this a desert world, I don't know, all you can see from orbit are a few wispy thin clouds and a planetary surface that is almost completely covered from pole to pole by one huge mega city.'

Merchant Captain Adele Halter 118-963

Hebrin is a strange world, orbiting within the habitable zone of Lodestar the system's K3V primary. Hebrin is a relatively small, tectonically inactive body, that despite having a molten core experiences very little volcanism or geological stresses, due largely to the fact that it has no moons. Early (Rule of Man) survey teams recorded the fact that this world has experienced regular bombardment by asteroids, large meteorites and cometary bodies in it's history, with the effect that native life did not develop here.

The thin atmosphere is all that is left from an abortive terraforming attempt made centuries ago that almost succeeded in making the place habitable. That was before the population explosion of big businesses and people flocking to Hebrin, seeking out a new and prosperous life. Water stocks are appalling, necessitating near constant deliveries of water both from within the Hebrin System and nearby by extra-solar worlds. Thus the Hebrin system is crammed to the hilt with water tankers, ice cutters and mining ships dragging in cometary materials from the Oort Cloud. Indeed water, typically a worthless commodity can fetch a price higher than gold, iridium or platinum in some quarters. Everything on Hebrin gets recycled and processed in vast water extraction plants, (including the dead). Hebrin is by nature a slightly cold world, hence most of the forty billion inhabitants need reliable heating and comforts though the air is breathable if a little on the thin side, heavily tainted with industrial pollutants. The cost of such support is scandalously high.. Most citizens live in tall interconnected city blocks or high rise dwellings or deep underground in large split level dwellings tunnelled out of the bedrock.

Despite the gigantic manufacturing capacity of Hebrin it's citizens tend to be poor, market forces having reduced wages to the bare minimum over the years in the face of escalating living costs. Thus there is lots of civil unrest, that tends to be vented through racial tensions and prejudices. Crime is rife in some areas and gang activity pronounced, the most renowned of which are the cybernetically augmented Cybes and the secretive Slicks. With many different sub cultures evolving amidst such a large and diverse population, Hebrin is home to a wide plethora of religions and clashing cultures, having Vargr, Droyne, Bwap supplementing its mostly Human census. In a worrying trend the use of psionics has even been portrayed in a positive light in the many media channels that swamp the airwaves of this diverse and busy star system. Whilst this is sure to prompt imperial interventions sooner or later, conspiracy theorists are having a field day claiming that competing cells of psionics exist on the planet, manipulating the government. This has prompted a mass import of psionic shield helmets as sported by public figures on a regular basis.

The Hebrin System Overview

Lodestar	K3V		
Orbit	0	Broken Rock	XS000000-0
	1	Shenandoah	Y100267-6
	2	Hebrin	B550A88-9 N De Hi Po
	3	Dalmatian	Y653325-9
	4	Villi-skis	Y682532-6
	5	Tolls Belt	Y000443-9
	6	Raven	SGG 11 Moons
	7	Petri Belt	Y000467-8
	8	Resell	YABA663-8
	9	Lodemar	LGG 21 Moons
	10	Vultis	SGG 4 Moons

Adventure: Volander Libre

By Frank Mikes

Introduction

Volander Libre is “One Act Adventure” in the EPIC style, an adventure writing format originally proposed by Traveller’s creator, Marc W. Miller. The EPIC adventure style presents adventures in a loosely related series of Acts and Scenes, creating a more freeform approach to scenario presentation. Within this loose framework, the Referee can present Scenes in whatever manner is appropriate to the unfolding story, merely needed to cover any indicated Key Scenes before moving on to the next Act. For more information on the EPIC format, consult the following article which can be found online: <http://www.traveller5.com/EPIC.html>

This adventure is designed to introduce newly created characters to the Traveller Universe and should provide them with their own starship at the end of the adventure (although with some fairly heavy caveats) in order to continue adventures with. Many Traveller adventures require that adventurers have a starship at their disposal.

Volander Libre is designed using the Traveller 20 rules system. Unfortunately I am not skilled enough with other systems to translate between them but I will attempt (where possible) to use the BITS system provided at the beginning of this fanzine. The adventure takes place in the Gamma Quadrant of the Empty Quarter Sector, Gimushi subsector.

Background

Julio Wescorini is an honest merchant with a problem. He is the captain of the *Volander Libre* (Flying Free) and has made an enemy of Nord Nevolosh, a criminal boss on Lazisar. Julio has never agreed to run illegal cargo for Nord’s criminal gang but was recently been granted a contract to drop cargo on Lazisar. The first couple of runs went well, Julio managed to avoid attracting the notice of the gang but on his last trip (a little over a month ago), the *Volander Libre* was noticed leaving. A little asking around by Nord’s associates allowed the criminals to find out that the *Volander Libre* was due back in two weeks.

When the ship appeared Nord’s followers attacked his crew killing one of them (Darina Unatallia – Julio’s lover) and scaring the others away. Word has also been put out among the locals that it is unhealthy to work for Julio.

Since unloading, Julio has lost his crew and has not been able to hire another. He has lost the contract and Nord’s people are pushing him to start taking cargos for them, then all of his problems will be over. Despite taking one beating, Julio has stubbornly refused.

Scene 1 – Mustering Out and Finding Work

For whatever reason, the characters have left whatever service they were in. It could be that their tour ended, that they were in the merchants and their contract expired or that they just ended up here as part of their last job. The adventure commences on Lazisar (Empty Quarter Sector, 1233), a desert world teaming with people who it seemed to have arrived here as part of an evacuation of some planet decades ago. The PCs have been dropped in the most crowded part of the planet, the southern polar starport which doubles as a military port.

The starport itself is a massive complex which would have seemed modern and efficient until the hordes of beggars, hucksters and general low-life element got in. Starport security is tough and brutal on anyone that even looks like they want to cause trouble and the PCs can guess that sophont rights and dignity are not foremost in security forces collective mind.

Paint the picture that Lazisar is a poor, dry and mostly unpleasant planet that most PCs won’t want to stay on. Then let them discover a notice on one of the screens at the starport.

CREW WANTED

Please contact Captain Julio Wascorini on the *Volander Libre* – Slip 33 – Com (08650321)

If the PCs decide to do some checking on Captain Wascorini or the *Volander Libre*, an Easy (T20 DC10) Gather information or Streetwise or other related skill will let them know that anyone joining the crew might have

‘unfortunate accidents’. A Difficult Gather Information check (T20 DC20) will let them know that Nord Nevolosh, a local gang leader and that he has a problem with Wascorini and is out to get him.

If the PCs contact Wascorini, he will be seem very eager to speak with them as soon as possible.

Troubleshooting: It may be that the PCs think to try to work for Nord Nevolosh. If they do, initially make it difficult to find the crime leader as he actually lives in a nice house over 200km away from the starport, then have a group of toughs identical to those in Scene 2 approach them, tell them to stop asking questions that they don’t want answered and rough them up. If they persist, they may have a chance of taking on and even winning against Nevolosh (assume that he has three identical gangs of toughs at his house) but they will still be on the planet and Wasorini will still want a crew. Note as well, Lazisar is law level D. This mainly applies to the starport region and things get far more lax away from there but this will make it difficult to get weapons as easily as Nevolosh can.

Scene 2 – Job Interview

Captain Wascorini asks the PCs to meet him at his ship docked at slip 33. He knows that Nord is after him but is relatively safe in the high security area of the starport. A Difficult (T20 DC20) Sense Motive or other related skill check will reveal how nervous he is and how much he wants to get off planet. He needs two more crew, an astrogator (although he can get by in a pinch himself) and an engineer. He will start at 4000Cr per month for each but will go as high as 6000Cr if pushed. Any other characters he is willing to hire on as cargo handlers for 700Cr per month. He will not be moved on that figure until the attack occurs.

The Attack

Nevolosh’s people have been tipped off that someone has called Wascorini and has sent some toughs to check it out. The interview will be taking place in the cargo hold when the toughs will walk in and try to intimidate the PCs and Wascorini. They couldn’t bring any weapons through starport security but all are armed with stout, metal pipes that can be used as clubs. The toughs will tell the PCs unless they leave quick and never come back it will go badly for them. If they refuse, the toughs attack.

The PCs can use whatever improvised weapons are around at a -1 penalty (the toughs have the same penalty for the pipes). They will initially start doing stamina damage but if things start going poorly (or one of the PCs has a real weapon) they will start making it deadly and attack Life Blood.

Julio will join in to assist the PCs and will also be a target of the thugs. If they thugs win, they will strip the PCs naked and leave them outside the *Volander Libre* where they will be discovered by security. Julio will be left inside the ship.

If the PCs win they can turn the toughs over to security (or keep them on board, but that allows a chance for escape). If questioned, the toughs will reveal (after suitable inducements) that they are working for Nevolosh but don’t really know anything else. Security will happily take them off the PCs hands and will promise prosecutions but they don’t really have much hope of catching Nevolosh in this. However, after the fight, Julio is more than happy to pay the PCs the highest rate he offered previously. He’ll even pay cargo handlers 1100 per month but he will say that money will be tight for a while. He doesn’t have too much left but he’s happy to have a fighting crew.

He will urge the PCs to quickly get whatever they don’t have with them and then stay in the ship where it is safe. After the attack he is also willing to relate his problems with Nevolosh.

Lift

The next day Julio will announce that they will leave for Askaath later in the day and he will go looking for cargo and passengers. He will only suggest passengers if there is a cargo handler willing to act as purser. The deal he will make with the purser is 1300Cr per jump with passengers and if none are found, the PC goes back to being a cargo handler for 1100Cr per month.

Julio will not go for speculative cargo but will load the cargo bay with 66 tons of cargo. There is nothing suspicious of this cargo but the PCs are likely to be paranoid. The cargo is a 4x10 ton bulk liquid containers of Pornando (a liquid used in fire suppressants), 2 x 20 ton containers of Hydronine (a hydrogen based chemical used in a fuel binding process), 10 x 1 ton containers of computer component wafers, 2 x 5 ton slabs of a treated tin/copper alloy, 4 x 1 ton containers containing lead sinkers for fishing and a 2 ton container with 6 farm harvest machines.

As for passengers, once again the PCs will probably be paranoid. There are 5 High Passage passengers and 4 middle passage passengers sharing two cabins. The middle passage passengers are the Tong family, consisting of Tricia and Patton Tong (wife and husband) who are on a business/holiday trip with their children. The other two middle passengers are their two children, Radan (boy, 7 yo) and Olinda (girl, 5 yo). The children are a bit rambunctious but won’t cause too many problems.

The high passage passengers are as follows. Roj Veejers (male, 62 yo) business man who is returning home after trying in vain to negotiate a deal. Irina Eshinto (Female, 19 yo) rich daughter returning home after having an operation on Lazisar to replace her defective heart. Tilley Innerson (Female, 31yo), champion bowls player, somewhat of a celebrity in that field especially on Lazisar. She is traveling with Rolland SanUllman. Rolland SanUllman (male, 44 yo), Rolland is a sporting agent for Tilley and has organized a bowls tournament on Askaath. Bowls is a sport similar to horseshoes except one uses a ball to try to get closest to another ball. It is popular on both Lazisar and Askaath. Finally there is Lorinnar Tohachitic (Male, Varrg, 29yo). Lorrinar will be very secretive and will barely speak except to answer questions. He could be described as thinking words cost him 50Cr each. His listed reason for travel is that he has a sick relative on Askath. He also has a number of bulky packages with him. It is assumed that the PCs will find him very suspicious and may confront him or try to search his cabin. He has a number of security devices with him including an alarm which detect movement in his cabin and will sound a screeching alarm if the correct code isn't programmed in. Also, his baggage is dye-packed and will explode if anyone tries to open them. Inside are Imperial Credits and an Autopistol. In total he is carrying 1,400,000Cr in cash. If forced to he will confess that he is a courier for the Bank of the Great Imperium and he is transferring cash. He knows exactly how much he has and will report any transgression against him or his property to the MoJ. Lorinnar will avoid combat if at all possible but if it is inevitable, use the High Tech Regular Guard Template and then pray for the PCs souls. This encounter will hopefully encourage PCs not to be paranoid.

Scene 3 – Askaath

Askaath is seen almost as a retirement planet or playground for the rich. Laws are somewhat restrictive and no weapons are allowed out of the starport for pretty much any reason the PCs can come up with. The guards are polite, friendly but firm (even if they seem a little over eager to please). There is no heavy industry allowed on the planet and the environment is fairly idyllic. The air is clean, there are a wide variety of landscapes and many resorts offer a wide variety of activities from extreme sports to rest and relaxation that could count as full medical care on many planets.

Major exports are Cusa Fruit, which is a very large berry from one of the native plants. Rich, dark Hunada Wood which is a luxury wood for furniture and carvings in this area of space and holo-disk recordings. Most recreational holo's for the region are also made here, sort of like a mini Hollywood.

Lights, Camera, Action!

While unloading cargo, the group are approached by a small, black man who appears to be arguing with about 4 different aides. Anyone with K/Entertainment or anything similar (I seriously doubt most PCs will have any such skill, but maybe I'm wrong) can make a DC 10 (Easy) roll to recognize him as Oscar Ullindi, a holo director responsible for a number of hit entertainment holos.

He will ask around, introduce himself and ask if he can borrow the *Volander Libre*. "My problem is this." He says looking shapely at one of his assistants, "Raini here decided to hire the worst pilot on planet and wrecked the cheap, crappy set ship we had. Now Raini, yes I do mean you Raini, will pay you to fly your ship in for footage, and while it should only be about a day's work I don't think it will be cheap. Now Raini, broker the deal."

The unfortunate Raini, a nice looking red haired woman who looks about 40, sighs and proceeds to get somewhat gouged by Julio. The final deal is that the day after tomorrow, you will all fly the cast and crew to an isolated filming location 1,100 km away in the Renatandal Mountains. After the crew set up their recorders, the *Volander Libre* will make a couple of fly bys and then land on a nearby hill. The PCs and Julio, dressed in Zhodani uniforms and helmets will play the part of flunkies for the Zhodani villain (Played by accomplished actor Zelman Chahandry). You will leave the ship near a cave mouth and will suddenly be confronted by Captain Eldark and Lt. Qwerk (played by action star Lars Ben-Issorwick and Vargr actor Martooth Hestintor), who will shoot one of you and then retreat back into the cave.

This scene should be a lot of fun for players and Game Master alike. Camp up the director as much as you want and show the actors to be very different from the roles they play. Zelman often plays cerebral characters, mostly villains but is actually a bit of a class clown, always telling off-color jokes and quite happy to gossip about his fellow actors. Lars is the big, hulking action hero but is fairly educated and will spend most of his time reading quietly, while Martooth is a party animal in every sense of the word. He will disappear into his tent fairly often and seem high on something whenever he isn't in front of the camera.

The day will go pretty much as planned, the director will order a number of retakes for the landing wanting you in 'exactly' the right position (he seems to think that a starship should be able to land within 5 centimeters of a small mark on the ground). One, almost perfect take was ruined by someone in an aircar flying past in the background. Zelman, who's with you in the ship comments that it's probably 'image seekers' (the traveler equivalent of paparazzi) who then try to sell the pictures to trashy magazines.

After finally producing a landing scene that Ullindi is happy with, you trot out with your fake Zhodani weapons and helmets.

Assassin

Unknown to anyone, Nord Nevolosh, enraged that Julio managed to escape, has hired Wenda Laskar, an assassin with an excellent reputation, to kill Julio Wasorini and return his body to him on Lazisar. Wenda, a few days behind the *Volander Libre*, has managed to find out where they are and hired a flyer to land nearby. For her it has then been a fairly simple matter to walk up to the shoot sight and blend in as if she belongs. She's managed to find and overpower the weaponsmith for the film. The weaponsmith is the one that takes care of all of the weapons and weapon effects for recording. She has now managed to procure an autopistol for herself and is waiting until she can get a shot at Julio and then plans to escape in the *Volande Libre* herself with the body.

Unfortunately for her, she cannot see who is who with the Zhodani helmets on. She immediately shoots the one in the lead, thinking that it's probably the Captain. Chaos will erupt and Zelman (the poor guy in the lead) will shout, "Agggh, gods! I've been shot, by a real gun!"

Chaos will erupt and it's likely that the PCs (and Julio) will rush back into the ship where their real weapons are. Quick thinking PCs can distract Wenda by pointing their fake Zhodani weapons at her, forcing her for cover but they will certainly become targets next round.

Provided the PCs manage to stop the assassin, they will then have to assist with the wounded and the chaos of the set. They can take survivors back to the city for medical treatment but they will have to be interviewed by the local authorities. Provided that they didn't go too far over the top they should be let off without too many difficulties. After all, the assassination attempt was actually recorded.

The next day, Julio gives everyone the day off to relax and see the sights. He gives everyone a 200Cr bonus, after all they've saved his life and he's made money on the holo recording deal.

Scene 4 – Leaving for Kenrasda

After a day (or two if the PCs push for it) off, Julio will start looking for another cargo and more passengers.

For PCs interested he manages to find a 60 ton crane packed in a single large cargo container that barely fits in the bay, (it was on loan from a company on Kenrada and is being sent back). And 10, long, half ton boxes containing slats of Hunada wood.

Passengers consist of 2 couples (Edan and Nornia Kollowand, Lossel and Kel Bord) and one solo man (Tobias Kollowand), all members of the same family and visiting relatives on Kenrada. Vic and Blaire Jens-Stabler are also visiting family on Kenrada. Yeston Jelmores is a retired executive for Plastic Concepts LIC who is going to Kenrada to rake his replacement over the coals for some very poor marketing decisions while the last 2 passengers are Bwaps. These two are Seswannawanna and Kessortassina. They are both working on a scientific project for the Imperium. The project is to study the effectiveness of several government-sponsored environmental projects on various local worlds. Both Bwaps are scientists in this field and extremely boring but quite happy to explain their preliminary results with anyone who expresses even the slightest interest.

Dead at the wheel

On the fifth day of the trip, the PCs will notice that Julio hasn't come out for breakfast as he normally does. His quarters door is closed and locked but a search of the ship will show that he isn't anywhere else. He will not respond to any contact and eventually, the PCs will probably force open the door eventually and will discover Julio Wescorini dead in his bunk. There is no indication of struggle or sign of serious injury on his body.

This will all come as a shock to the passengers (and probably to the PCs) but they will arrive at Kenrada in less than two days and it will probably be dealt with then. Note, while PCs may suspect a passenger is another assassin there will be nothing suspicious pointing toward any of them. All are willing to account for their movements the previous evening and most of them were in their quarters. None of them seem in the slightest bit guilty but some PCs (of the more gung-ho variety) will just make them think that they are more subtle assassins – what can you do?).

Kenrada turns out to be a small, lonely outpost with a massive population trying to eek out a living. The authorities (provided they are contacted), will interview the passengers first so that they can leave and then the PCs. They take the body away and do a search of the ship. They seem fairly blasé about the death and are quite happy to let the PCs go about their business of transferring cargo but ask them not to leave the planet.

The results of the autopsy come back 3 days later and puts natural causes as the cause of death. The lab found no toxins in his system (aside from those normally found) and basically concludes that as an older man, Julio simply had a heart attack in his sleep. This is the actual cause of death. Julio's heart was weak and he had been warned once or twice in the past about it but didn't believe it.

There is a safe in his quarters. The combination is not available, but the safe can be broken into. If the PCs can't break in themselves, they can always hire someone on the planet to do it.

Inside, is the ship's capital, 62,150Cr. An old snub pistol, the contracts he made the PCs sign as part of the crew as well as the current contracts for the cargo and the deeds of ownership for the *Voldander Libre*.

Cast of Characters

Julio Wescorini

(Merchant 8) Medium (5'5") Human

Stamina 31, Lifeblood 11 Init +6; Speed 6 m (3 squares);

Armor Class: 14 (+1 Dex, +3 vac suit), Armor Rating: 3 (vac suit)

Str 7, Dex13 Con11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha14, Edu 12, Soc 11

SV Fort +4; Ref+4 Will +3;

ATTACKS:

Weapon	Hit	Damage	Crit	ROF	Rnds
Snub Pistol	+4	1d10	20	1	6
Fist	+2	1d4-2	20		
Improvised Club	+1	1d4-2	20		

Skills: Pilot+14, P/Merchant+15, K/Trade Law+10, Appraise+14, Gather Info+15, Trader+16, Broker+16,

Liason+15, T/Computer+8

Feats: Vessel (Ships Boats, Starships, Grav), Ship Tactics, Steward, Calculating Eye, Market Analyst, Armour (Light, Vacc Suit), Weapons (Marksman), Barter, Brawling, Connections (Merchant), Zero G/Low G adaptation, First Aid, Improved Initiative

Empty Quarter Echo

By Jeff M. Hopper

**Mikik (Empty Quarter 0228 X340975-5)
019-993**

There is not a large deterring Imperial presence in orbit around Mikik, even though the world is interdicted. The population of Mikik is enough of a deterrent to offworlders. Most of the population is not only highly xenophobic, but it seems that many of the local religions equate offworlders with harbingers of evil. Add to the above the current fad of many onworld militaries to use simple chemical weapons like blister agents, makes Mikik the least likely place to visit for many in the Empty Quarter. Hell, I don't want to get gassed by some local just because I want to do some trading.

Just to illustrate how widespread the fad of chemical weaponry is, the world is listed as having a tainted atmosphere because of it. There are several low-lying areas that cannot be entered without protection. This includes the former city-state of Zellikuk, which is effectively uninhabitable sitting in a cloud of blister agent that will not dissipate for another twenty-five years.

Looking through the telescope at this world is a wonder. Mikik orbits close to a small gas giant, which when combined with solar flares from the close type M star leads to some spectacular aurora displays coupled with intense radio interference. The cold deserts occasionally have human-made clouds of toxic blister agents floating across them. Over five billion people cluster around the small inland lakes and oasis in numerous city-states and nation-states. At night, the surface cities glow with light. Well, they glow until a particular bad solar flare disrupts the local power grid and everything goes dark over part of the world.

The Imperial Interdiction Squadron is a constellation of twenty locally produced Runabouts operated by the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service. The Navy used to operate one of the old Abupappabwapuu-class Interdiction Cruisers in orbit around the world until an incident that happened a few years ago. Now you won't find the incident written up by the Traveller News Service or any other news media in the Empty Quarter, this incident was hushed up as quickly as it happened. The Imperial Navy especially does not want the story spread, but if you listen in the dingy drinking establishments then you'll hear the tale told by discharged Navy personnel.

The story goes like this. With an Abupappabwapuu-class in orbit and its crew watching the inhabitants of Mikik killing themselves in various ugly ways, the Captain of the ship apparently decided to try and help them. Seeing that one of the few fertile areas onworld was being destroyed by poison gas, the CO ordered his crew to use their repulsor batteries and laser batteries to disperse the poison gas cloud. The gas cloud was indeed moved away from the fertile ground and dispersed. However, the city-states nearby who witnessed this event took it as a prelude to an attack and launched their own pre-emptive strikes against each other. The story says that about a couple million people on Mikik died in the attacks.

With the death and destruction recorded from orbit, the Captain was court-martialed, and the Navy gave responsibility of Mikik's interdiction to the Scouts. It's the sort of story you're likely to hear in a bar being told by ex-Navy guys trying to cage a free drink or two. The only problem is that it is common knowledge that the Navy had charge of Mikik's interdiction and gave it over to the Scouts with no public explanation given. Any merchant ship chartered to haul resupply to the Scout runabouts there can ask about the story, the answer is always the same. The Scout crews just say that they know nothing about that and couldn't talk about it if they did.

It's OK to enter the system and skim from the gas giant as long as comm contact is maintained with the Interdiction Force. If you want to put down on Mikik, the Interdiction Fleet will let you after several warnings about the natives. From what I heard, the last merchants who landed there put down in a city square and were almost immediately shelled by artillery. When the crew left their damaged ship, a mob attacked them and killed each one. Best thing you can hope for is selling to the Scouts in orbit.

Probably one of the worst things about the place is the sirens. If you are insystem, try to ignore any radio signals coming from Mikik between frequencies of 50 kilohertz to about 160 kilohertz. I know that most of those radio signals will get lost in the mush from the primary star and its usual solar weather activity, just let the signals stay lost. You see, there are inhabitants of Mikik who are not so xenophobic that they do not believe that they cannot find a better home somewhere else in the Imperium. So they gather together and use radios that are considered illegal in any city-state on the planet to call on any ship insystem to come down and take them offworld. Rumor has it that the people pay well, usually with everything they have. Of course, every city-state military in the area will be trying to

kill you any way they can while you are onworld. And don't go lookin' for help from the Interdiction Force while you're doing this, they think that if you've gotten yourself into the mess then you can get yourself out of it.

But hey, at least I didn't get beaten up here. That has to count for something, shouldn't it?



Starship Datasheet: 17 Small Craft

By Omer "Employee #2-4601" Golan

Preface

The Solar Triumvirate is an alternative setting for Traveller (detailed in **Stellar Reaches #3**), situated in strong polity of the same name encompassing approximately nine subsectors, centered on the capital of Sol. While it is still a relatively young state (especially when compared to the official traveller universe's Imperium), it had a complex and bloody history of border and civil wars, but has also progressed from mid-TL8 to late-TL12 in the span of two and a half centuries. During its history, the Solar Triumvirate has produced a wide range of small craft for various purposes. Currently (at the year 2400 AD), many of these designs – those in production before 2365 – could also be found in the use of the three newer polities - the Serpentis Quadrant Alliance, the Lydia Consortium and the Coreward Autonomous Zone – who have “inherited” many of these crafts, usually along with their production blueprints, when they’ve seceded from the Solar Triumvirate during the Insurrection. This article presents a wide selection of small craft – from escape pods to heavy bombers – used by the Solar Triumvirate and its splinter-polities. All designs are given with their year of introduction, as well as the name of their producing corporation; more than one corporation, either as a joint venture or in several similar models, produces the “Standard” designs. The small craft used exclusively by other polities in the same universe will be detailed in further articles in Stellar Reaches. All of these designs should be completely usable – possibly with minor tweaks – in almost any Traveller setting.

Rules Used

First and foremost, these designs use Steve Osmanski's Small Craft Design System presented in Stellar Reaches #3. I thank him heartily for his great work, without which these designs would not have been possible in their current form. In addition, several elements, either new or converted from High Guard, have been added to some of these designs, according to the suggestions presented in my “Little Black Book 2 Expanded” article in Stellar Reaches #3. Other than these articles, only the Classic Traveller Book 2 (LBB2) is necessary in order to use these rules. Book 5 (High Guard) is also recommended for reference, but not strictly required. In addition, I have used Book 5 (High Guard) computer and engine TL rules and

computer hull limits instead of the Book 2 (LBB2) ones.

Small Craft Descriptions

2051 – StellarDream Armstrong-class Multi-Purpose Craft (TL8)

Using a 30-ton streamlined hull, the Armstrong is capable of generating 60 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 2-Gs acceleration. It carries 2.4 tons of fuel (giving 4 weeks endurance for the power plant) and has a small bridge allowing a crew of two and providing life support for 10 people for one week. The Armstrong has one hardpoint designated and 0.5 tons reserved for fire control, but no weapons installed. It may mount up to one laser; remaining weapons must be sandcasters or missile racks. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/1 computer. The Armstrong has 19.9 tons excess space available. It costs MCr14.1 single or MCr11.3 mass-produced. This is an antiquated multi-purpose small craft design dating back to the early STL colonial days of the pre-Stagnation era; while StellarDream has ceased its manufacture in 2204, many of these old craft could still be found on the frontier, mostly as remnants of a colony ship's small-craft fleet.

2056 – StellarDream Skyhome-class Orbital Outpost (TL8)

Using an 80-ton unstreamlined hull, the Skyhome is incapable of any major acceleration (though it can make small orbital corrections and perform stationkeeping). It carries no fuel and has a large bridge allowing a crew of two and providing auxiliary life support for 20 people for one week. Power (5.6 megawatts) is provided by one ton of solar panels, and life support is generated by a 4-ton Full Hydroponics module, allowing (at least in theory) indefinite life support for the crew of two. The Skyhome has one hardpoint designated and 0.5 tons reserved for fire control, but no weapons installed; It may not mount lasers, only sandcasters or missile racks. The Skyhome may not mount any significant computer. There are two full-sized staterooms and no low berths. The Skyhome has 56.5 tons excess space available. It costs MCr21.7 single or MCr17.2 mass-produced. The Skyhome class was one of the first self-contained, mass-produced space stations to be designed and manufactured. Back in the STL colonial times, it was intended to serve as a base of operations for deep-space scientific, survey and maintenance crews, both in the Sol system and the interstellar colonies. What it lacked in power it has in

endurance, which was practically infinite. As StellarDream has stopped to produce the Skyhome class in 2166, these stations are quite rare today (in 2400) except for in the more remote STL colonies.

2272 – Standard Escape Pod (TL9)

Using a 10-ton streamlined hull, the Escape Pod is capable of generating 15 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 1-Gs acceleration. It carries 1 ton of fuel (giving 6 weeks and 4 days of endurance for the power plant), an auxiliary Solar Panels power plant providing enough power to keep the emergency low berths working after the fuel runs out, and has life support for 25 conscious people for 24 hours. The Escape Pod may not mount any weapons, but has a Model/1 computer. The Escape Pod carries six emergency low berths and has 0.49 tons excess space available. It costs MCr8 single or MCr6.4 mass-produced. This is the most common “lifeboat” design, required by Solar Triumvirate law to be carried (in amounts sufficient for the entire crew and all of the passengers) on any commercial starship of above 600 tons; some military vessels mount these Escape Pods as well. While this design is somewhat antiquated, it is effective enough to be used throughout known space.

2279 – Standard Belter Bin (TL9; Type-GB)

Using a 20-ton unstreamlined hull, the Belter Bin is capable of generating 200 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 6-Gs acceleration. It carries 4 tons of fuel (giving 2 weeks endurance for the power plant) and has a small bridge allowing a crew of two and providing (in conjunction with 0.5 tons of additional support systems) life support for 10 people for three weeks. The Belter Bin has a double turret mounting a missile rack and a beam laser. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/1 computer. The Belter Bin has 5 tons excess space available. It costs MCr18.9 single or MCr15.1 mass-produced. The Belter Bin is an old but reliable small craft design intended for use in high-performance space construction and mining work. It is a versatile craft capable of tugging and mining, as well as defending itself against claim-jumpers and belt-pirates. Belter Bins are found in mass amounts wherever there is asteroid mining or heavy space-based industrial work.

2280 – Martian Mechanics Dove-class Shuttle (TL9; Type-XY)

Using a 50-ton streamlined hull, the Dove is capable of generating 100 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 2-Gs acceleration. It carries 1 ton of fuel (giving 1 week endurance for the power plant) and has a large bridge allowing a crew of two and life support for 20 people for one week. The Dove has one hardpoint designated and 0.5 tons reserved for fire control, but no weapons installed. It may mount up to one laser; remaining weapons must be sandcasters or missile racks. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/1 computer. The

Dove has 33.5 tons excess space available. It costs MCr18.9 single or MCr15.1 mass-produced. The Dove, while an old design, is the most common class of shuttle in known space, partially supplemented by the heavier but faster Heron class in heavy-duty missions. Still, the Dove is cheap, reliable and effective, and is still produced to this day.

2281 –Standard Gig (TL9; Type-GY)

Using a 10-ton streamlined hull, the Gig is capable of generating 30 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 3-Gs acceleration. It carries 1 ton of fuel (giving 3 weeks and 2 days endurance for the power plant) and has a small bridge allowing a crew of two and life support for 10 people for one week. The Gig has one hardpoint designated and 0.5 tons reserved for fire control, but no weapons installed. It may not mount lasers, only sandcasters or missile racks. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/1 computer. The Gig has 1.5 tons excess space available. It costs MCr9.4single or MCr7.6 mass-produced. Gigs are general-purpose, occasionally armed small craft, typically used for various errands between several space stations in the same star system or as a private mini-shuttle to ferry a starship’s captain when disembarking from his ship.

2294 – T-Y-C Gauntlet-class Dropship (TL9; Type-TT)

Using a 20-ton streamlined hull, the Gauntlet is capable of generating 60 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 3-Gs acceleration. It carries 1 ton of fuel (giving 12 days endurance for the power plant) and has a small bridge allowing a crew of two and providing life support for 10 people for one week. The Gauntlet has a triple turret mounting a missile rack and a beam laser and a sandcaster. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/1 computer. The Gauntlet has 12 small craft couches in addition to 4.5 tons excess space. It costs MCr16.1single or MCr12.9 mass-produced. The Gauntlet was the first dedicated combat troop transport of the Solar Triumvirate Marine Corps, and has served with distinction during the Matriarchate War. Small, unarmored and lightly armed, it was replaced in Marine service by the Talon-class Dropship in 2369; most Gauntlets are found today in the hands of mercenaries, corsairs and even merchants.

2296 – Standard Fuel Shuttle (TL9; Type-TY)

Using a 90-ton streamlined hull, the Fuel Shuttle is capable of generating 300 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 3-Gs acceleration. It carries 71 tons of fuel (giving 23 weeks and 4 days endurance for the power plant) and has a large bridge allowing a crew of two and life support for 20 people for one week. The Fuel Shuttle may not mount any weapons, but has a Model/1 computer. The Fuel Shuttle has no available excess space. It costs MCr34.1 single or MCr27.3 mass-produced. The Fuel Shuttle skims and transports fuel

for large, unstreamlined ships and stations that are incapable of conducting frontier refueling by themselves.

2298 – StellarDream Dolphin-class Light Fighter (TL9; Type-FL)

Using a 10-ton streamlined hull, the Dolphin is capable of generating 60 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 6-Gs acceleration. It carries 1 ton of fuel (giving 12 days endurance for the power plant) and has a pilot couch allowing a crew of one and provide life support for him for 24 hours. The Dolphin has a fixed mount carrying a sandcaster and a pulse laser. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/1 computer. The Dolphin has 4 tons excess space available. It costs MCr12.7 single or MCr10.2 mass-produced. The Dolphin was the primary space-superiority fighter used during the Matriarchate War, when it was used to protect the Solar Triumvirate's Whirlwind-class bombers from the Matriarchate's Diane-class interceptors. Today it is still in wide use as a light, cheap fighter; while it cannot even hope to contend with the contemporary armored, high-tech military-grade fighters, it is still highly effective against most corsairs and second-rated raiders. It is also very common in the use of pirates and mercenaries. It is also occasionally used for planetary orbital defense in the frontier areas.

2300 – StellarDream Whirlwind-class Bomber (TL9; Type-FM)

Using a 15-ton streamlined hull, the Whirlwind is capable of generating 30 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 2-Gs acceleration. It carries 1 ton of fuel (giving 3 weeks and 2 days endurance for the power plant) and has a small bridge allowing a crew of two and provide life support for 10 people for one week. The Whirlwind has a triple turret mounting two missile racks and a sandcaster. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/2-Fib computer. The Whirlwind has a magazine of 3.5 tons and no available excess space. It costs MCr24.9 single or MCr19.9 mass-produced. The Whirlwind was the Solar Triumvirate's bomber during the Matriarchate War, providing the Solar Triumvirate ships with additional missile-launching capability. The Whirlwind was replaced by the much larger Blizzard in 2340; currently the Whirlwind-class bombers serve mostly on the frontier, especially in the hands of corsairs.

2302 – T-Y-C Bull-class Tug (TL9)

Using a 30-ton unstreamlined hull, the Bull is capable of generating 600 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 6-Gs acceleration. It carries 6 tons of fuel (giving 1 week endurance for the power plant) and has a small bridge allowing a crew of two and life support for 10 people for one week. The Bull has one hardpoint designated and 0.5 tons reserved for fire control, but no weapons installed. It may mount up to three lasers or any other weapons. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/1

computer. The Bull has 3.5 tons excess space available. It costs MCr41.8 single or MCr33.5 mass-produced. The Bull-class tug is a relatively small vessel with an extremely powerful engine, capable of towing or pushing massive objects; it is used all over known space for heavy construction and industrial duties.

2316 – T-Y-C Heron-class Heavy Shuttle (TL9)

Using a 90-ton streamlined hull, the Heron is capable of generating 300 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 3-Gs acceleration. It carries 3 tons of fuel (giving 8 days endurance for the power plant) and has a large bridge allowing a crew of two and life support for 20 people for one week. The Heron has one hardpoint designated and 0.5 tons reserved for fire control, but no weapons installed. It may mount up to three laser or any other weapons. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/1 computer. The Heron has 67.5 tons excess space available. It costs MCr33.3 single or MCr26.7 mass-produced. The Heron is a heavy-duty transport craft, far surpassing the older Dove in terms of payload and acceleration, but also far more expensive to purchase and maintain. It is mostly used for cargo- and passenger-carrying duties in the busier highports, as well as for heavy in-system hauling.

2340 – StellarDream Blizzard-class Bomber (TL9; Type-FM)

Using a 40-ton streamlined hull, the Blizzard is capable of generating 100 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 2-Gs acceleration. It carries 1 ton of fuel (giving 1 week endurance for the power plant) and has a small bridge allowing a crew of two and provide life support for 10 people for one week. The Blizzard has a triple turret mounting two missile racks and a sandcaster. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/3-Fib computer. The Blizzard has a magazine of 24.5 tons and no available excess space. It costs MCr45.2 single or MCr36.2 mass-produced. The Blizzard heavy bomber has replaced the outdated Whirlwind in the early 2340's, providing a better computer and a far larger magazine. It was the main bomber used during the Insurrection, and is still in wide use today by the Solar Triumvirate Navy (as well as the navies of the Alliance, the Consortium and the Coreward Autonomous Zone), gradually being replaced by the newer Hailstorm class.

2341 – StellarDream Eagle-class Fighter (TL11; Type-F)

Using a 15-ton streamlined hull, the Eagle is capable of generating 100 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 6-Gs acceleration. It carries 1 ton of fuel (giving 1 week endurance for the power plant) and has a pilot couch allowing a crew of one and provide life support for him for 24 hours. The Eagle has a turret mounting a sandcaster and a plasma cannon. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/2-Fib computer. The Eagle has 5 tons excess space available. It costs MCr28.9 single or

MCr23.1 mass-produced. The Eagle has almost completely replaced the greatly outdated Dolphin-class fighter in military use since the 2340's, and has served with distinction during the Insurrection. While the newer, armored Raptor-class fighter is also in use since 2371, many Eagle-class fighters are still in Naval and Marine use, especially onboard the older carriers.

2369 – T-Y-C Talon-class Dropship (TL12; Type-TT)

Using a 95-ton streamlined hull, the Talon is capable of generating 400 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 4-Gs acceleration. It carries 4 tons of fuel (giving 1 week endurance for the power plant) and has a large bridge allowing a crew of two and provides life support for 20 people for a week. The Talon has a turret mounting a sandcaster and a beam laser, and is armored to Factor-6 specs. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/2-Fib computer. The Talon carries five G-Carriers (included in its price) and has 13.2 tons excess space available. It costs MCr69.6 single or MCr55.7 mass-produced. The Talon is the primary combat transport of the Solar Triumvirate Marine Corps, carrying a full Marine platoon along with its organic G-Carriers across orbital and interplanetary distances. It is well armed and well armored in order to protect its passengers against interceptors and surface-to-air/ASAT missiles.

2371 – StellarDream Raptor-class Armored Fighter (TL12; Type-FA)

Using a 25-ton streamlined hull, the Raptor is capable of generating 400 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 6-Gs acceleration. It carries 1.5 tons of fuel (giving 1 week endurance for the power plant) and has a pilot

couch allowing a crew of one and provide life support for him for 24 hours. The Raptor has a turret mounting a sandcaster and a fusion cannon, and is armored to Factor-7 specs. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/3-Fib computer. The Raptor has 0.5 tons excess space available. It costs MCr61.7 single or MCr49.4 mass-produced. The Raptor is the Solar Triumvirate's new heavy fighter, surpassing the older Dolphin and Eagle fighters in almost every field, from firepower and armor to electronics and computing capabilities. Its massive price tag, however, has somewhat slowed its integration into the Solar Triumvirate fleets, and it is mostly used by the newer carriers.

2372 – StellarDream Hailstorm-class Bomber (TL12; Type-FM)

Using a 40-ton streamlined hull, the Hailstorm is capable of generating 200 tons of thrust, allowing for up to 5-Gs acceleration. It carries 1 ton of fuel (giving 1 week endurance for the power plant) and has a large bridge allowing (with the additional third couch) a crew of three and provide life support for 20 people for one week. The Hailstorm has a triple turret mounting three missile racks. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/4-Fib computer. The hailstorm has a magazine of 15 tons and no available excess space. It costs MCr65.8 single or MCr52.6 mass-produced. With high-G capabilities and a powerful computer, the Hailstorm is the Solar Triumvirate's modern bomber, gradually replacing the aging Blizzard-class bombers. As they lack armor, however, Hailstorm bombers are escorted, like their predecessors, by space-superiority fighters such as the Raptor-class Armored Fighter.

Prestigious Careers: Bounty Hunter

By Christian "Chaos" Schwietzke

The classic thing to do for a lawbreaker who wants to escape punishment is to flee. The classic thing to do for law enforcement agencies to catch a fugitive who has escaped to where they do not have any legal powers is to hire a bounty hunter. These individuals who make a living with the retrieval of transient delinquents must develop a variety of combat and non-combat skills to outwit their prey.

Characteristics: Bounty Hunters have to be both smart and tough. Fugitive criminals do their best to evade detection and, once found, usually put up determined resistance. Bounty hunters often meticulously study their prey, trying to emulate their way of thinking, in order to anticipate their next move. Most of them have traveled far and wide in the course of their work.

Background: Bounty Hunters are often ex-military personnel, though some are self-taught or „reformed“ rogues. Many also have some experience with starships.

Adventure: The work of a Bounty Hunter is almost by definition an adventure; the skills acquired chasing down criminals can be very useful for almost any kind of adventure.

Requirements

To become a Bounty Hunter, a character must fulfill the following requirements:

BAB: +4

Skills: K/Interstellar Law 4+

Feats: Connections (Law Enforcement or Underworld)

Stamina Dice: d8+Con modifier

	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
1st	+0	+1	+1	+0	Sneak Attack +1d6, Cultural Focus
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+0	Target Focus
3rd	+2	+2	+2	+1	Well Connected
4th	+3	+2	+2	+1	Sneak Attack +2d6, Target Focus
5th	+3	+3	+3	+1	Cultural Focus
6th	+4	+3	+3	+2	Target Focus
7th	+5	+4	+4	+2	Sneak Attack +3d6
8th	+6	+4	+4	+2	Target Focus
9th	+6	+4	+4	+3	Cultural Focus
10th	+7	+5	+5	+3	Sneak Attack +4d6, Target Focus

Special Abilities

The following are special abilities related to the Bounty Hunter prestige class:

Sneak Attack – as the Mercenary class feat; the Sneak Attack bonuses gained from both classes stack

Cultural Focus – the Bounty Hunter becomes adept at tracing targets of a specific culture; he receives a +2 bonus on all checks trying to determine or anticipate the actions of targets of a specific culture; at 5th and 9th level, he can choose an additional culture to focus on, or increase the bonus for an already selected culture by +2.

Target Focus – the Bounty Hunter specializes in tracing specific types of criminals, and receives a +2 bonus on all checks trying to determine or anticipate the actions of specific types of targets; at 4th, 6th, 8th and 10th level he can choose an additional type of target or increase the bonus for an already selected target type by +2. Target types are specific categories of criminals, such as terrorists, pirates, organized crime leaders, bail jumpers or mortgage skippers. The bonuses from Cultural Focus and Target Focus stack.

Well Connected – as the Traveller class feat

Class Skills

Bluff (Cha)	Bribery (Cha)	Disguise (Cha)	Driving (Dex)
Forgery (Int/Dex)	Gambling (Int)	Gather Information (Cha)	Hide (Dex)

Intimidate (Cha)
Pilot (Int/Dex)
Technical (Edu)

K/Interstellar Law (Edu)
Sense Motive (Wis)
Tumble (Dex)

Listen (Wis)
Speak Language

Move Silently (Dex)
Spot (Wis)

Skill Points per Level: 4+Int modifier



Prestigious Careers: Starport Medic

By Christian "Chaos" Schwietzke

Most starports of category C or better also include medical facilities for travellers; the medics and physicians who work in these facilities are liable to see – and treat – members of almost every species that travels between the stars.

Characteristics: Starport Medics are, due to their work, among the most cosmopolitan people to be found outside the ranks of starship crews. No alien is too alien for them to be acquainted with it; they can treat conditions that many other physicians have never even heard about. Those of them who work in the seedier regions of Charted Space are also adept at treating injuries related to tavern brawls and the occasional shoot-out.

Background: Most Starport Medics are medics or physicians wanted to see the galaxy, but for some reason didn't join a starship crew; now the galaxy (with all its medical problems) comes to them. Others have chosen to practice within the extrajurisdiction of the starport because local laws in some way interfered with their work ethics.

Adventure: A career medic may be a liability in a firefight, but afterwards, when the bullets have stopped flying, he or she suddenly becomes very popular. A Starport Medic's medical expertise is invaluable on almost any kind of adventure, be it due to his ability to treat his comrades, or by using his skills as a trading commodity on less advanced worlds.

Requirements

To become a Starport Medic, a character must fulfill the following requirements:

Skills: T/Medical 8+, K/Interstellar Law 4+

Feats: Xeno-Medicine (any one species)

Stamina Dice: d6+Con modifier

	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Surgery, Xeno-Medicine, Master Healer +1
2nd	+0	+0	+0	+3	Steady Hand
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Xeno-Medicine
4th	+1	+1	+1	+4	Master Healer +2
5th	+1	+1	+1	+4	Xeno-Medicine
6th	+2	+2	+2	+5	Linguist
7th	+2	+2	+2	+5	Xeno-Medicine, Master Healer +3
8th	+2	+2	+2	+6	Minor Medical Miracle
9th	+2	+3	+3	+6	Xeno-Medicine
10th	+3	+3	+3	+7	Master Healer +4, Medical Miracle

Special Abilities

The following are special abilities related to the Starport Medic prestige class:

Surgery – as the general feat

Xeno-Medicine – as the general feat; the character must select races common to her native sector (or the campaign sector) as subjects of this class feat first; if she already has the Xeno-Medicine feat for four such races (except her own, of course), then she can select another race

Master Healer – at 1st level, and at every third levels thereafter (4th, 7th, 10th), the Starport Doc receives a cumulative +1 bonus to the Lifeblood damage she can heal per week by providing long term care.

Steady Hand – from 2nd level on, the Starport Medic can always Take 10 on a T/Medical check, regardless of the circumstances

Linguist – as the Traveller class feat

Minor Medical Miracle – at 7th level, the Starport Medic can revive a character that has –10 Lifeblood. If she is able to administer aid within (3 plus the target character's Con modifier) rounds of death, she can make a DC 30 T/Medical check (for which she can Take 10); if the check succeeds, the character can make a DC 15 Fort save to stabilize to –9 Lifeblood. This is a full round action that can be retried every round until the time is up.

Medical Miracle - at 10th level, the Starport Medic can revive a character that has –10 Lifeblood. If she is able to administer aid within (3 plus the character's Con modifier) minutes of death, she can make a DC 40 T/Medical

check (for which she can Take 10); if the check succeeds, the character can make a DC 20 Fort save to stabilize to –1 Lifeblood. This action takes 5 rounds and can be retried until the time is up.

Class Skills

Appraise (Int)	Bribery (Cha)	Gambling (Int)	Gather Information (Cha)
Knowledge (Edu)	Leader (Int)	Liaison (Cha)	Profession (Wis)
Read/Write Language	Sense Motive (Wis)	Speak Language	Spot (Wis)
T/Medical (Edu)	T/Computers (Edu)	Use Alien Devices (Wis)	

Skill Points per Level: 6+Int modifier

Patron: Wet Feet

By Christian "Chaos" Schwietzke

Patron Type: Administrator

Necessary Equipment: Starship (any kind)

Location: Starport (water world)

Players' Information:

During their stay at the starport, the characters are approached by one of the senior supervisors of the atmospheric/orbital traffic control center. Two hours ago, a starship failed to enter planetary parking orbit and went into an uncontrolled atmospheric descent on the far side of the planet, outside the starport's sensor coverage; it is assumed to have crashed somewhere in a relatively shallow area of the ocean. There are far too few system defense and customs ships available to search the whole of the area where the starship might have crashed, so the supervisors asks the characters to place their ship at the disposal of the search-and-rescue efforts. He offers to cover all expenses that the character incur during the search-and-rescue efforts, as well as bonuses if they manage to find and rescue any survivors, or at least ascertain the fate of the crew and passengers.

If the characters agree, starport technicians will equip the ship with a magnetic anomaly detector (MAD) – a device that can detect large metal objects (such as a starship) if the vessel carrying it passes over the objects low enough. In effect, the MAD allows the characters' vessel to detect the crashed starship if it is in shallow water and they fly over it at low altitude.

Referee's Information:

1. The starship has crashed in deep water. Neither the characters nor any of the other participants of the search-and-rescue effort are able to find any trace of the crashed ship.
2. The starship has crashed in shallow water and disintegrated on impact with the ocean floor. All that the characters can find is debris, both floating and on the ocean floor; further investigation will be hampered by radioactivity from remains of the ship's fusion reactor.
3. The starship managed a water landing but then sank as the interior was flooded through a hull breach. The water at the crash site is shallow enough that crew and/or passengers in vac suits may have survived – their time, however, is running out.
4. As in 3., but only the jump fuel tank was flooded; most or all of the crew, passenger and cargo areas are still intact, but the survivors are trapped inside. There are not enough vac suits in the ship, so the some ingenuity is needed to get everybody out alive.
5. As in 3., but some of the crew and passengers escaped before the ship sank and managed to reach one or more of the nearby islands. The referee is encouraged to have the characters encounter aggressive native wildlife.
6. The crash was faked, and the ship has landed safely in shallow water. The ship's passengers are actually thugs hired by the owner to overpower and kill the crew, fake a crash landing and unload the cargo. The owner intends to report both the ship and its (high-value) cargo as a loss to his insurance company; the ship was actually worth a lot less than the insured sum, and the cargo is to be recovered and sold on the black market. If the characters discover all this, secure the ship and cargo and defeat the thugs, they will also receive a sizeable reward from the insurance company.

The ship in question should be some type usually encountered as an independent trader – such as a Free Trader or Far Trader, or maybe a Scout/Courier.

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